UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Romance and Narrative Games of Illusion and Reality:

Parody in

El Ingenioso hidalgo Don Quijote de la Mancha and *Northanger Abbey*

BY

Kirsten Anne Byron

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Department of Comparative Literature and Film Studies

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K. A. Byron

12 Grantham Place
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22 April 1994

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled Romance and Narrative Games of Illusion and Reality: Parody in *El Ingenioso hidalgo don Quijote de la Mancha* and *Northanger Abbey*, submitted by Kirsten Anne Byron in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Professor M.V. Dimić

Dr. J.S. McMaster

Dr. J.R. Varela

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Abstract

There is a paradox inherent to literature: while literature is seen as a means of arriving at general truths as articulated in history, it is also a fiction. The blending of historical truth and imagination is particularly evident in the romance genre which purposely incorporates both elements. Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra and Jane Austen have confronted this contradictory message, which is especially evident in romance, through parody in their novels *Don Quijote de la Mancha* and *Northanger Abbey*, respectively.

To discuss parody, I incorporate L. Hutcheon's definition of parody and examine how Cervantes and Austen's parodic humour is incorporated as a means of mocking the romance through controlled distortion. At the same time, however, they are not malicious in that both authors find and emulate praiseworthy aspects of the romance. This definition of parody further emphasizes the need for a critical value-judgement, not only of the original but of the imitation as well, on the part of both the author and the reader.

Cervantes and Austen's parodies follow a similar pattern of creating comic heroes who naively believe that the romances they read are a true representation of reality. As well, because the protagonists are also readers contemporary with their audiences, Cervantes and Austen use their characters' behaviours as a means of social commentary. Finally, both authors never let the reader forget that their protagonists are only fictional characters, adding yet another layer to the illusory nature of "fictional reality." By playing with the levels of reality, the authors challenge the reader to be alert to the fallacies and absurdities inherent in romances and also to question them.

In order to examine more closely the manner and results of parodying and criticizing the romance genre, I analyze, in Chapter One, the romance genre, looking at narrative form and the nature of characterization, setting and plot. Then, in Chapter Two, I discuss Cervantes's use of the romance in the *Quijote*. Finally, in Chapter Three, I compare this with Austen's use of the parody of romance in *Northanger Abbey*.

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Introduction

The pleasure of hearing or reading a "good story" and allowing one's imagination full expression is perhaps one of the earliest enjoyments of every child. Even cultures which are dominantly illiterate have an extensive oral "literature" which serves both to amuse and to preserve a sense of history and culture. The idea in the western tradition, moreover, that literature can educate through enjoyment has long been ingrained in its philosophy, hence the large role of telling a story while instructing. In the Middle Ages this concept of blending fiction with a moral or educating purpose flourished for instance in Aesop's fables. In the Renaissance and later, however, as fantasy literature--such as the romance--grew ever more popular to a literate audience, this notion gave rise to concern as to whether truth--particularly historical--could be mixed with fiction. Two writers who got caught up in this debate were Miguel de Cervantes in the time when the Renaissance period was yielding to the Baroque and later, Jane Austen in transforming the Age of Reason into that of Romanticism.

In their novels, *El Ingenioso hidalgo don Quijote de la Mancha* (1605 and 1615) and *Northanger Abbey* (drafted first in 1794 and published in 1818), respectively, Cervantes and Austen parody the romance genre in order to define a more realistic form of writing. To this end, these authors significantly contributed to the development of the modern novel. Parody thus becomes more than merely a tool to ridicule and develops into a means of education for writers and readers, with regards not only to realistic and fantastic genres, but to the act of writing fiction in

general. Through a comparison of how the novelists use parody, a clearer picture of their definition of a good literary form and their contribution to the novel can be obtained.

Cervantes was aware that many readers did not distinguish between history and fiction, and despite a growing desire for reform, many romance writers still insisted that their stories were true, at least in an allegorical and moral sense. Don Quijote, thus, can declare that the stories of romance knights are just as true as are the histories of the Castilian knights, in that both types of narratives claim to serve an educational purpose. Unable to accept that the increasing number of fantastic romances being published served a didactic function, Cervantes wrote the *Quijote* as a criticism of this fiction, but also to show how imaginative fiction could be written if it were not hindered by fictitious claims of veracity. At the same time, he used the *Quijote* to criticize "idle" readers who demanded no more from literature than amusement. In his novel he raised the concern of the position of the reader in interpreting and, thereby, creating the text.

In Austen's writing, as well, the question of the nature of reading is centralized. Just as Don Quijote is criticized for failing to see a difference in the two types of narratives, Austen's heroine Catherine Morland in *Northanger Abbey* is reprimanded for failing to recognize the difference between truth and reality in Gothic fiction. Although the Gothic writers did not expect their readers to accept the story as a true account, they frequently inserted long descriptive passages of the natural environment which amounted to little more than purple prose. Catherine, unable to

recognize this because of her passive reading habits, also suffers, because as a result, she fails to appreciate the English countryside because of her constant comparisons to a fictitious one.

Romance literature, thus, has failed to educate its readers because the romance authors have allowed them to accept passively the writers' role as an authority. In Chapter One, I will expand on the narrative style of the romance, which emphasizes the role of an omnipotent writer, whose story is told to a child-like audience, in that it is unable to discern the relevance or a moral without the authorial voice. As well, I will discuss how the use of black and white characters allows a reader to absorb the story without the need to interpret or analyze. This simplification of character, in fact, discourages the reader from any reading in depth. If a character is dark and brooding, there is no need to pay particular attention to his behaviour: this alone is enough to assure the reader he is evil.

Such use of characters also allows the reader to see himself as the hero of the tale and to feel that he is the one participating in the numerous adventures. And, because there is little or no character development, episodic adventures become the essence of the romance. This emphasis on plot and the adventures of a morally unambiguous hero or heroine, moreover, is the source of the reader's enjoyment in romance and fantasy literature. After a brief examination of the paradigmatic romance plot, I will then conclude Chapter One with a discussion of the four romance genres which Cervantes and Austen parody.

Cervantes's and Austen's parodies begin, as I have stated, as a rejection of the passive role of the reader. Their texts demand that readers share the responsibility in creating the narrative while they read. To this end, there is a considerable amount of playing with narrative conventions and mocking of the passive reading practice involved in romance reading. Don Quijote and Catherine Morland are scrutinized and ridiculed for their uncritical acceptance of romances but, at the same time, Cervantes and Austen realize that the romance narrative technique does have a great potential to reach readers, but it must be used in a correct manner. Thus, although these writers are ultimately concerned with the quality of writing, they are both extremely aware that the act of writing is irrelevant if the texts are not read. Their parody of romance, then, is not only a parody of writing but of readers as well.

In Chapter Two, the nature of Cervantes's parody, through a reader who has lost his sanity, is examined. The first section describes the parodic key which Cervantes established in order to set out how the text should be read. To this end, Cervantes burlesques the traditional Renaissance prologue, but in the process of parodying it, he also demonstrates the parodic process which will evolve in the text. Following this, the section entitled "Parody as Criticism" examines how Cervantes ridicules the claim of chivalric romance writers that they are recounting truthful or historical events. Co-existent with the growing claims of veracity were, in fact, a greater amount of supernatural events intended to surprise and hold the interest of readers. Readers were not, however, encouraged to see these events as resulting from poetic imagination, rather, because of the influence of the Roman Catholic Church in

Spain, writers would in fact emphasize that the occurrences were Providential signs. In the *Quijote*, then, Cervantes criticizes the reader who willingly accepts such fantastic events as factual and does not question the nature of the writing. Far from it, for a time it seemed that romance readers could not get enough of such fantasy and, thanks to the invention of the printing press, poorly written and repetitive romances could be churned out and disseminated at a faster rate than ever before.

The fact that writers, despite their popularity and talent, succumbed to a base motive of writing ridiculous narratives for money was also strongly resented by Cervantes. In the canon of Toledo's speech, Cervantes criticizes the readers and the audiences for accepting such writings, as well as authors and play writers for producing them. Cervantes's use of narrative to criticize the reader and writer is examined in the section entitled "Irony and the Author". These techniques include direct mocking of the characters by the author through the use of irony. As well, romance writers are mocked through the creation of a fictitious and unreliable narrator and through the inclusion of interpolated stories, which were growing ever more popular in the romance genre.

Perhaps more than the narrative technique, Cervantes's major means of burlesquing and laughing at the romance is through the use of Don Quijote's squire. In the following section, "Sancho Panza as Ironic Comedian," Sancho's role in mocking the romance is examined. Unaware of what chivalric romances are until he is given a job as Don Quijote's squire, he cannot help laughing at, and commenting upon, what he perceives are the romance's absurdities in contrast to a more pragmatic

view of life. As Don Quijote's constant companion after the first sally, moreover, he is used to contrast his practical approach to life with his master's idealistic one. As the two approaches to life are brought together, the collision of ideas and sentiments leaves the reader wondering which one is, after all, better.

It is not until after Sancho's introduction to the text that the reader observes the emergence of a more complex parody of romancing emerging; what began as a mere burlesque of romance evolves into a more detailed analysis of literature. In the section entitled "The Aesthetic Quality of Romance," Cervantes's admiration of the romance genre is observed. It is not the romance, *per se*, which Cervantes is criticizing, rather how it is being abused by writers. The form of the chivalric romance is seen to be one which has a greater potential and in the *Quijote*, its combination with other genres frees Cervantes from its limitations. As a result, we see that Cervantes is critical of romances which serve no other purpose but to amuse the reader. He creates, in the *Quijote*, a novel which serves as a vehicle for satirising society and which retains the reader through a new type of *admiratio*.[1] Whereas romance writers were content to produce *admiratio* through supernatural sensations, Cervantes does so by going in the opposite direction.

In the ensuing section, "Don Quijote and the Romance Reader," Cervantes's example of *admiratio* is examined. For him, *admiratio* is produced not from the

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[1] The creation of the sensation of *admiratio* in chivalric readers refers to "those feelings of wonderment aroused by the revelation of unknown or unexpected marvels" (Williamson, 76). See also E. C. Riley's "Aspectos del concepto de *Admiratio* en la theoría literaria del Siglo del Oro" in *Homenaje a Dámaso Alonso*, iii (Madrid, 1963), pp. 173-182.

spectacular events of the supernatural but from the mundane: the actions of an *hidalgo* who likes to read romances. The readers' attention is caught by the adventures of the mad knight coping in a contemporary society, rather than by any impossible occurrences, which after multiple repetitions no longer have the same power to hold a reader's imagination. Instead, Cervantes retains the reader's interest by creating a character who not only engages in "adventures" but also relives those events through discussion with his squire. The resulting self-consciousness gives Don Quijote and Sancho an existence which romance characters never had. They are, like actual people, reliving their own adventures through their discussions and giving meaning to them after the fact, unlike romance characters who never reflect on their actions. In the *Quijote*, thus, adventure becomes an internal act, rather than an external one.

This ability of a character to internalize and give meaning to his existence through the creation of a textual life becomes one of the important defining features of the novel in the eighteenth century and foreshadows the occurrence of people beginning to see their own life as a novel being told either by themselves or someone else. This step of reading the adventures of others and becoming the central character of a novel is essential in an understanding of Austen's *Northanger Abbey*. With the publication of Samuel Richardson's *Pamela*, the novel was brought into the realm of the "common person". Pamela's morality situates her among her middle class readers and, along with her first person narrator and a contemporary English, is the perfect example of how to read one's life as a fiction. Although the Gothic romance had a more elaborate setting, it retained the sentimental, middle-class heroine with whom

the readers could associate. Indeed, in *Northanger Abbey*, Catherine Morland is not the first character to see herself as a textual heroine. She learns to do so after being encouraged to view her friend, Isabella Thorpe, as a sentimental heroine. Catherine only takes the next logical step after hearing she will be going to stay at a typical Gothic haunt--an abbey.

In the first section of Chapter Three, "A Gothic Set in England," Austen's parody of the typical Gothic motif of haunted, medieval settings is discussed. Like Cervantes, Austen brings the romance to a contemporary setting and, as a result, upsets the reader's expectations. Such an act also attempts to give a more realistic presentation, as Gothic heroines were usually portrayal as contemporary bourgeois women caught in a medieval setting. In Austen, however, a heroine who believes in the far-fetched Gothic romances is out of place in contemporary England. She becomes, like Don Quijote, a character to be mocked by the author and reader. But, whereas the *Quijote*, especially in Part I, used numerous interpolated stories in which Don Quijote played no part, *Northanger Abbey* is more limited in its scope, concentrating solely on Catherine's adventures.

Such a shift is partly explained by the fact that Cervantes's emphasis lay more on the loose plot structure of the romances, which he felt allowed the writer the most artistic freedom, whereas Austen highlights character, contrasting the unrealistic portrayal of the sentimental and Gothic with those in her novel. In the section "Gothic Character Traits in English Society," Austen's concern with a more realistic fiction, along with, therefore, more plausible characters is discussed. As a comedy of

manners, the interaction between characters constitutes the major part of the novel's action and, as such, more three-dimensional characters are needed. The reader of Austen cannot expect to understand character with only a superficial description of their appearance. Indeed, as she warns us in the first sentence, "No one who had ever seen Catherine Morland in her infancy, would have supposed her born to be an heroine" (Austen 13). Characters in Austen frequently are not what they seem. It is not only Catherine in *Northanger Abbey* who is not what she initially appeared. To this end, Austen forces the reader constantly to adjust and re-adjust an opinion regarding a character.

Along with alterations in attempts to define character, Austen also keeps the reader modifying his criticism of the Gothic romance. As a parody, *Northanger Abbey*, as in the *Quijote*, gives the reader, initially, the impression, that it will present the Gothic in a negative, albeit amusing light. By presenting realistic characters, instead of Gothic ones, Austen encourages the reader to see the fictional aspect of the romance ones; however, after initially accepting that this is Austen's opinion, the reader is forced to review his stance because what was once straight criticism is no longer so. Like Cervantes, whose criticism was an attempt to modify romance rather than destroy it, Austen's criticism of romance lies more in its abuse by poor writers than with the potential of the form itself. Austen, following Cervantes, can use the form to criticize her society, and in an acceptable manner. Moreover, she shows that a reader's interest does not need the miraculous and the far-fetched in order to be retained. Instead, a reader is more enthralled by a novel if it can be related to his own

life. Catherine's naiveté, and resulting foolish actions, will interest a reader more because they recall a time when every child wanted to believe in a fictional--and perfect--world.

Austen does not leave her heroine in a child-like state, but she does allow her the satisfaction of having been right in some of her apparently ridiculous ideas. The final section, "Gothic Romance Translated into Realism," shows how Austen modifies the fantastic occurrences in the Gothic in order to use them in a more realistic genre. The Gothic novel attempts to interest readers by placing their novels--and often English heroines--in foreign countries, such as Italy, so that the occurrence of what would be called "unacceptable" in England will pass without censure or bewilderment. To this end, Austen's quixotic heroine is "scolded" for her belief that such things could happen in England; however, as always, Austen will not have her readers receive anything so easily. After accepting that this is Austen's verdict, there is a shift again, and the reader discovers that, although Catherine exaggerated the crime by seeing it in a Gothic light, a crime, nevertheless, has occurred. Through this continually shifting picture, Austen appears to be attempting to paint one that is ever closer to reality, or will seem to be so, in its complexity, ambiguity, and even contradictory nature.

Romance and Realism

When Cervantes's mad hero decides he is actually a knight errant, he proceeds to attack windmills and combat groups of sheep. And, when Austen's gullible heroine, Catherine, opens, with a trembling heart, a chest in her bedroom in hopes of finding a hidden Gothic manuscript, she is interrupted by a mundane fear of being late for her hosts' supper. Confronted with such inversions of expectation, the reader knows, in these narratives, that he is engaged in a parody of the romance which ironically subverts romance through realism. The use of the term "realist" fiction does not imply that the content of the narrative is historically true, rather it refers to the attempt to present a mimetic and plausible view of the society it portrays. Such works create an alternative universe which must follow the same laws as the actual universe. When viewed from this perspective, realism becomes more than "merely a set of stylistic and narrative conventions, but a fundamental attitude toward the relationship between the actual world and the truth of literary texts" (Pavel 46). Hence, anything which happens in that alternative universe could possibly, and perhaps necessarily must, occur in the actual world, given a certain set of actions and reactions.

The realist fundamental attitude towards fiction conflicts with romance attitudes and, thus, has created the oscillation of preference between, and interest in, romantic and realistic literature which has been evident for the last four or five centuries (Frye 1976, 37). In romance fiction, which is an older genre, there is no obligation to present possible alternative worlds, and the author is not bound by the

laws of the universe. Such unguided freedom is part of what many realist parodists have criticized in romance. Another strong reproach made by advocates of realist writing has entailed the romance use of, and participation in, social snobbery. This critique results from the romance tendency of favouring royal and noble heroes, that is, idealized characters or easily recognizable archetypes, with whom the reader can identify. Such child-like identification, critics claim, is one that will be outgrown and the reader will later consider immature.

This argument, however, fails to take into consideration the reaction-revolutionary[2] aspect of many romances, which is manifest in the hero's or heroine's desire to improve the state of society. Indeed romance, along with most other forms of fantasy literature, and not realism, is the preferred genre of "writers who do not believe in the permanence or continuity of the society they belong to" (Frye 1976, 138). Realist writings, in contrast, reveal a much more conservative view of society. The writer of this fiction tends to accept and promote society's present order and its associated ideology, often by representing change in terms of attitudes of caution and pessimism. In realistic literature, moreover, there is an aim towards representing and interpreting the known world, whereas the romance is more concerned with the imagination and wish-fulfilment, and contains elements of myth and fantasy. Indeed,

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[2] I am using the term "reaction-revolutionary" in a socio-historical sense which is characterized by favouring a perspective that would "return the society to a previous condition or even a former value system" (Baradat, 33). "Conservatism," on the other hand, is a term which I will use to denote primarily an attitude resistant to changing social conditions and more in particular ideological justifications, legitimizations, and beliefs (Baradat, 30-31).

for the romance, symbol, allegory and anti-representation in general are the preferred vehicles of its message.

The rise of the novel added another interesting dimension to the contrast of realistic and romantic fiction. The novel, according to Frye, was, in fact, "a realistic displacement of romance, and had few structural features peculiar to itself" (Frye 1976, 38). Rather than creating an entirely new formulaic structure, the novel simply adapted the old structure to allow for the telling of ordinary, or realistic, experience. Such a displacement of romance gave the novel an obvious element of parody; and it is not surprising, therefore, that many characters in novels have succumbed to romantic illusions of reality. The most well-known character of such a parody is, of course, Don Quijote, whose illusions bring about his eventual death and signal the death of chivalric romance. Catherine Morland, in *Northanger Abbey*, is another character who follows the example set by Don Quijote and becomes the object of Austen's realistic parody.

Before being able to analyze aspects of this parody, however, certain features of the romance genre which are played upon must be identified and examined. Through such a review of the mode of romance, especially, and of the meaning of the genres which are parodied, the quality and efficacy of Cervantes's and Austen's parodies can be, then, further elucidated.

Following the work of Frye in *Anatomy of Criticism*, I will refer to the mode of romance as a general category, which can be contrasted with myth, high mimetic, low mimetic, and ironic modes. Frye distinguishes these five modes according to the

hero's power of action. In romance, the hero is superior to his fellow men and his environment; however, he has no magical abilities and he is not a god. His environment is similar to the natural world, but the laws of nature are slightly suspended so that "enchanted weapons, talking animals, terrifying ogres and witches, and talismans of miraculous power violate no rule of probability once the postulates of romance have been established" (Frye 1957, 33). This mode excludes myths because of the human hero, but it includes all forms of folk tales, legends, and *Märchen*, and their variations or deviations.

Narrative Style

There is inherent in the term *Märchen* a sense of the child-like. It is primarily children in western and modern societies who listen to or read fairy-tales, and the reader's relationship to the romance narrative is analogous to the experience of a child. Critical attitudes are put aside. One enters a dream-like state and is taken by the hand and led through the romance by the all-controlling narrator. The reader will be taken to a world where nothing is required of him but willing acceptance of what he is told. Such acceptance is created through the romance narrator's mediation of the tale:

> He will intervene to comment and interpret, controlling the tone in such a way that he seems to bestow upon us a certain grace and dexterity of response and absolve us from the need to make full scale 'interpretations' (Beer 17).

Indeed, critical analysis is apparently not required, or desired, in reading romance. Instead the reader is to accept authorial assertions and prologues which emphasize the veracity of the romance.

Veracity is underscored in various ways in the different genres. The Gothic, and frequently the later chivalric romances, use the prologues and introductions as a means for the narrator to "explain" that the account is based on an actual manuscript found in the back room of a haunted house or discovered in a manner similar to that of finding the dead sea scrolls. Another frequent technique, to discourage critical reading and common to most romance forms, is for the narrator to address the reader directly, asserting that what he is saying is true and that he is only translating the manuscript. At times, moreover, to further the feeling of authenticity, the "translator" will claim that he does not know the outcome of a certain event because the manuscript has faded over time. Another common technique is the use of witnesses to the events, who are also given ample opportunity to describe them to the narrator, who then writes the report down verbatim for the reader. Through these technical manipulations, the author, in fact, dictates how the reader should interpret the romance:

> The romance is essentially subjective, although the personality of the writer may be expressed only through the work itself, not as a personal presence. We have to depend entirely on the narrator of the romance: he makes the rules of what is possible, what impossible ... The absurdities of romance are felt when we refuse to inhabit the world offered us and disengage ourselves, bringing to bear our own opinions (Beer 8).

Only by accepting the authorial control and manipulation, and by allowing oneself to be guided by the author, therefore, can the reader fully appreciate the romance.

Although the narrator's control of the reader's responses allows for an escape from reality, the better romances also use the creation of an ideal world as a means of instruction. Indeed, it is through "removing the constraints of rationalism [that] it can reach straight to those levels of our experience which are also re-created in myth and fairy-tale" (Beer 9). Like fairy-tale and myth, there is in the romance an emphasis upon adventure, which corresponds to the way people highlight and interpret their own experiences. Unlike the realistic novel in which there is a logical and horizontal continuity, linear time becomes irrelevant in the romance, and disconnected adventures fall one after the other, without transition. This emphasis on a vertical perspective accounts for "the curious polarized characterization of romance, its tendency to split into heroes and villains" (Frye 1976, 50). This polarization of paradigmatic characters avoids ambiguity and causes the reader to accept that he is viewing so-called common traits and impulses of human experience.

The entire structure of the later chivalric romance is also manipulated to avoid ambiguity so as to encourage the reader to see allegorical truths in the tale. Through the cyclical nature of romance the reader can readily perceive an unambiguous moral. To this end, romance begins and finishes in an idyllic state where there is order in society and everyone has their proper identity. This state of identity in romance is like the fairy-tale state "of existence in which there is nothing to write about. It is existence before 'once upon at time,' and subsequent to 'and they lived happily ever

after'" (Frye 1976, 54). As identity with, and belonging in society, is the state about which there is nothing to write, so loss of identity and alienation is the substance written of in romance. The regaining of the hero's identity, after proving himself in his adventures, reinforces the moral world where right is always rewarded and evil always punished. There is no doubt in the reader's mind who the hero or villain are, and his sense of order is reassured by the conclusion and by the narrator's summation of events and moral assurances.

Romance Characters

Good and evil are readily recognizable in the romance as a result of the lack of ambiguity. Because there is no gray area in this world, characters cannot be anything other than they appear. Physical descriptions of characters, along with the author's use of the landscape, guide the readers' interpretation of the individual characters. Radcliffe's depiction of Montoni's appearance in *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, for instance, leaves the reader in little doubt of the nature of his personality:

> This Signor Montoni had an air of conscious superiority animated by spirit and strengthened by talents, to which every person seemed involuntarily to yield. The quickness of perceptions was strikingly expressed on his countenance .... His visage was long, and rather narrow yet he was called handsome: and it was perhaps, the spirit of vigour of his soul, sparkling through his features, that triumphed for him. Emily felt admiration, but not the admiration that leads to esteem; for it was mixed with a degree of fear she knew not exactly wherefore (Radcliffe 122).

Radcliffe's description of Montoni epitomizes the Gothic and later romantic villain, recognizable by his dark brooding and dangerous air, whose pride associates him with

Satan. This villain is frequently empowered, in fact, by dangerous supernatural and satanic forces, making him stronger than the hero of medieval romance. The power of the villain is reinforced through a symbolic use of landscape. He is frequently associated with winter, and the coldness of his character indicates his exercise of power over life and death.

While the villain is analogous with winter, the hero is described with metaphors of spring. Thus, whereas the villain is dark and corrupt, the hero is fair and innocent. The hero's quest is one that will, upon successful completion, return his world to a state of that idyllic and innocent spring which the villain attempted to destroy. Like that of the villain, his description renders him immediately recognizable to the reader, set apart from his equals and supposed superiors, by his greater beauty, nobility of mind, strength, and prophesies or aid by "good" supernatural spirits. Montalvo's Amadís, for example, is noticed by the king and queen while he is only a child:

> la reina ... mirando de una finiestra, vio los donceles que con sus arcos tiraban, y al Doncel del Mar (Amadís) entre ello tan apuesto e tan hermoso, que mucho fue de lo ver maravillad; e viólo mejor vestido que todos; así que, parescía el señor (Montalvo 15).

While watching Amadís play with the other boys, she is so astounded by his attractive features and his courage in defending his brother that she asks to take the boy back to the palace so that he may live there. The emphasis on the hero's outstanding courage and personal sense of honour is another factor in setting the hero apart from others. He will prove himself, moreover, by his strength before his true noble or royal birth is discovered. The final reward for his valour is marriage with his beloved--a princess

in older romances, but usually a noble woman in the later ones. In fact, the chivalric hero usually sets out on his adventures in order to prove himself worthy of his lady's love.

The heroine is also set above the other ladies by her own sense of honour. She is, like the hero, acknowledged for her beauty and manners. Radcliffe's Emily perfectly epitomizes the romantic heroine:

> She had discovered in her early years uncommon delicacy of mind, warm affections, and ready benevolence; but with these was observable a degree of susceptibility too exquisite to admit of lasting peace. As she advanced in youth, this sensibility gave a pensive tone to her spirits, and a softness to her manner, which added grace to beauty, and rendered her a very interesting object to persons of a congenial disposition (Radcliffe, *Udolpho* 5).

Unlike the hero, whose honour is revealed in his physical strength, everything about the heroine is fragile and delicate. Her honour comes in preserving her innocence despite overwhelming threats from corrupt men. Even while preserving herself from what Richardson's Pamela called "a fate worse than death," the heroine cannot resort to physical strength. Instead, for the heroine, salvation comes through hope and prayer that her hero will arrive in time to save her. Thus, lacking physical strength to protect herself, the heroine exemplifies the Christian virtues. She is long recognized in literature for her patience in suffering and for her ability to forgive her persecutor. Pamela is one of the greatest examples of this type of heroine, who not only forgives her persecutor, but then marries him after teaching him to uphold Christian morality.

Although suffering, endurance, and victory are common to the hero and heroine there is no significant change or development in their characters after their

adventures. Moreover, the characters' actions and thoughts will, at times, strike the reader as unpredictable and unlikely. Such irregularity in the characters, however, does not detract from the story as long as it serves to further the plot. In fact, according to Frye, it is this lack of character depth and development that is the essence of the romance:

> The essential difference between novel and romance lies in the conception of characterization. The romancer does not attempt to create 'real people' so much as stylized figures which expand into [familiar] psychological archetypes (Frye 1957, 305).

The characters in romance then do not fail when they act unexpectedly because the reader never really thought of them as 'real' individuals. The type and characteristics of the heroine that is "Pamela" are generally, and essentially, not different from that which is "Emily" or is "Oriana".[3] Rather, all the changes which occur, such as the names, the places, and the specific adventure they are involved in, are surface and peripheral changes. The general plot structure of the romance, moreover, is formula driven, with only superficial changes among the different genres as I will show in the following section.

Typical Themes of Romance

Plot is the true heart of romance. And, thus, it is the predictability of the plot which captivates the reader. After the marriage of the hero and heroine, the reader can turn to another romance and usually be assured of a similar happy conclusion

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[3] Princess Oriana is the chivalric heroine of *Amadís de Gaula* (circa 1492-1504).

after hundreds of pages of tribulation. Romance is particularly satisfying because of the cyclical structure which leaves the reader with a sense of secure closure at the end of the story. Moreover, each separate adventure overlaps with the next without transition, using the technique of entrelacement, allowing the reader to move in a dream-like state, seeing only what is essential to the story. This technique allows, moreover, for any number of adventures; because the plot does not move in a linear fashion, it ambles along back and forth in time, stressing the content and allegorical truths over the realistic representation.

The paradigmatic plot, in its most ideal[4] and unembellished form[5], consists of the introduction of the identity of the hero (or heroine) and of his worthiness as the hero of the story. Following this, there is an occurrence which results in the loss of position of the hero; this can include social status, wealth, prestige, or security in the case of a heroine. The hero is then forced to assume another identity and embarks on a series of adventures, which result in further loss of identity and social isolation. This isolation is seen by the dark foreboding which now infuses the romance. The hero could be forced to wander through dark forests, caves, or labyrinths. Or, the heroine could find herself trapped and helpless against the threat of loss of life or

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[4] I say "ideal" because such a neatly structured formula can only exist in theory. Practice will always include variations, especially in the more intricate and well constructed romances.

[5] The following plot description is loosely based upon Northrop Frye's analysis of themes in *The Secular Scripture*. The chapters "Themes of Descent" and "Themes of Ascent" include a much more detailed analysis of themes than is necessary for my purposes.

honour. The hero is, at this instant, at the lowest part of the circle and guarding one's honour becomes crucial at this point in the romance because the loss can result in tragedy for the hero.

Indeed romances do not always end well for the hero and heroine, as the examples of the Tristan story, *Troilus and Criseyde*, and Richardson's *Clarissa* show. Nevertheless, they still qualify as romance in that, by definition, romance "celebrates--by the process of its art as much as by the individual stories--fecundity, freedom, and survival" (Beer 29). Thus, although the loss of honour of the hero or heroine is irretrievable and will result in individual tragedy because of the unambiguous moral world of romance, the narrative, nonetheless, can retain the expression of and celebration of the lovers' emotions. Despite the tragic endings, the romance narrative tone, with the exception of the Tristan story, lacks the pervasive sense of doom inherent in tragedy. Instead, there is, overall, a feeling of survival for the shared love if not the lovers.

At this lowest point of the circle, which is the turning point for the hero, if he does not lose his honour, he will receive a response to his quest. The hero who has not lost his honour now escapes from his imprisoned state, and the story completes the circle, and slowly moves to the original, or sometimes, a higher, state. This ascent first involves being ensnared in more adventures which take the hero closer to the recovery of his identity and social status. When the hero has triumphed in his adventures and is acknowledged by his society, his identity is restored. With this

restoration, the hero and heroine usually marry, and the story concludes with the feeling that the marriage has restored society to its proper and ideal state.

It is, as I have already stated, the hero's quest for an improvement in the social state which contributes to the reaction-revolutionary nature of the romance. There are also romances, however, which simply accept the social mythology without criticism. This is especially evident in popular romance and is referred to by Frye as "kidnapped romance" (Frye 168). In kidnapped romance, the hierarchal social order is not questioned and is, in fact, idealized.

Such examples of kidnapped romance can be seen in the later developments of the chivalric romance. In the mediaeval romances, there is an attempt to rationalize the feudal societies and to create a place for errant knights through the exploits of worthy knights. The later chivalric romances, however, blindly recreate this feudal world because of a feeling of admiration for the hierarchal system and present them as the ideal society. By the time the Amadís cycle was popular in Spain (circa 1500's), the entrelacement structure was so haphazardly stitched together that the author, himself, seems to have lost the thread of the allegorical truths. In the Gothic romances, as well, the authors appear to be recreating aspects of the medieval world only to inspire aesthetic and novel pleasures in the readers, rather than employing the imagination of romance so as to encourage readers to acknowledge the appeal inherent in the reforming of a corrupt society into an ideal one.

Romance Genres

So far, I have looked only at the romance mode, rather than at the specific genres. As I have hinted before, there are obvious differences between the genres and a study of these differences is important for an analysis of how they are parodied by Cervantes and Austen. The four genres relevant for their parodies are the pastoral, chivalric, sentimental, and Gothic. These genres are distinct especially in regards to their use of setting and plot. Thus the reader of the *Quijote* will readily identify differences in Don Quijote's adventures which mimic those of a knight in a chivalric romance and the adventures of characters he meets who attempt to live as if they were in a pastoral romance. The reader of *Northanger Abbey*, as well, can easily distinguish allusions to the Gothic romance and to the sentimental novel.

Setting is one of the most recognizable features in distinguishing between the genres in part due to the fact that romance is full of descriptive detail regarding the world it creates, such as elaborate descriptions of clothes, rooms and objects in a castle, or of food and entertainment at feasts. Such detail allows the reader to believe the fictional world is physically present, often to the point of vulgar materialism. Such description "absorbs the reader into experience which is otherwise unattainable. It frees us from our inhibitions and preoccupations by drawing us entirely into its own world" (Beer 3).

In the *Quijote*, both the world of chivalric romances and a somewhat less popular genre, the pastoral, are closely scrutinized. In Part I, Chapter xi, Don Quijote

expounds on the idyllic virtues of the pastoral to a group of shepherds and describes it as the golden age of man:

> Dichosa edad y siglos dichosos aquellos a quien los antiguos pusieron nombre de dorados; y no porque en ellos el oro (que en esta nuestra edad de hierro tanto se estima), se alcanzase en aquella venturosa sin fatiga alguna, sino porque entonces los que en ella vivían ignoraban estas dos palabras de *tuyo* y *mío* .... Entonces sí que andaban las simples y hermosas zagalejas de valle en valle y de otero en otero, en trenza y en cabello, sin más vestidos de aquellos que eran menester parr cubrir honestamente lo que la honestidad quiere y ha querido siempre que se cubra (Cervantes 99).

Don Quijote's description of the pastoral romance includes, of course, the setting: the valleys and hills in the country. This form of romance became particularity popular with the rise in urban communities. And, as Don Quijote's speech reveals, it reflects a nostalgic view of an idyllic and simple life, unaffected by the business and hypocrisy of city life. It is set, furthermore, in a non-existent past and is reminiscent of the Golden Age of Greece, right down to the appearance of Greek gods and goddesses.

Such is the backdrop of the pastoral romance, in which disillusioned courtiers, or demi-gods, dress up as shepherds and shepherdesses. They spend their days staring dazedly at sheep, lamenting over their disloyal and cold-hearted lovers, and pretending to be philosophers. The business of farm life never seems to take too much time, thus allowing for frequent romantic interludes. In Jorge de Montemayor's *Los Sieto Libros de Diana* (circa 1555), for instance, sheep can obviously be left alone for months while unhappy lovers go in search of the Virgin goddess Diana in their distress. This world is frequently visited by nymphs of the goddess, who help guide

the lovers to Diana. She becomes the final judge of loyal and disloyal lovers, and it is she who will redress the wrongs and restore peace in the shepherds' world.

The obvious artifice in the pastoral world makes its parody in the *Quijote* understandable. Nevertheless, the genre was extremely popular. Montemayor's *Diana*, for example, was published in the mid fifteen hundreds, and by the year 1600, there were 26 Spanish editions, 11 editions in French, and one in English (Kennedy xv). Despite its artifice, then, there were obviously some charms to account for the appeal of the pastoral. Even Cervantes, although he later parodied the pastoral, wrote, with earnest ambitions, *La Galatea*, which was a pastoral romance, in 1585. To account for this genre's appeals one must look at its most distinctive feature: a preoccupation with love. More so than in any of the other romance genres, love and discussing love, dominates over adventure and action. The form of the pastoral in fact allows for songs describing all aspects of love and for philosophical discussions regarding it. Indeed, the very setting and "the atmosphere of the pastoral world is peculiarly suitable to the nurture and flowering of love" (Kennedy xxvi).

The love described in the pastoral, moreover, is recognizable by its purity and simplicity:

> A love more simple, because one's mind is not so dangerously subtle; more diligent because one is not busied with any other passion; more modest, because one is scarcely acquainted with vanity; more faithful; because when the liveliness of the imagination is less exercised, one has also fewer causes of uneasiness, of aversion, of caprice (Fontenelle in Kennedy xxvi).

Love in the pastoral is in a state of innocence and grace, remaining untouched by the corruption evident in the reader's society. Added to this is the refined and polished

poetic style. A lot of the pastoral's charm, thus, lies the combination of the topic of simplest and purest love with the language of the highest culture, set in an idyllic environment.

The beauty in the pastoral's composition is not the only attraction of this romance. The pastoral world's charm is further enhanced by its close affiliation with romantic comedy. These genres of romance combine a similar type of happy ending which allows for past mistakes to be overcome. This is especially evident in the role of Diana in Montemayor's *Diana*, who becomes the benevolent symbol of a second chance (Kennedy xxvii).

There is yet another reason for the pastoral's popularity, which stems from the nature of the setting. In the creation of a Golden Age, readers are provided an escape form the drudgery of city life. This is more, however, than merely an escape. The imaginative creation of an ideal place stands in sharp contrast with reality. Poets of the pastoral are not just describing an alternative to reality, but are in fact using the nostalgic ideal to criticize the contemporary state of affairs.

Like the pastoral, the chivalric romance is set in some idyllic past of an unspecific time and place. But, whereas the pastoral emphasizes light and open spaces, the chivalric romances make a much greater use of night scenes, dark forests, and enchanted castles during the knight's adventures. As well, the action usually begins and ends in the court, emphasizing that the knight has a more socially conscious role than is apparent with the lovers in the pastoral. The knight's adventures, especially in mediaeval romances, can involve a quest for his identity

which requires a social context. When taken away from the court society, the knight is confronted by a dark world which is governed by a different set of natural laws. Magical objects which offer protection or peril are common, as are magical places and people. The court worlds created by the chivalric authors of the Renaissance are perhaps the most developed in romance fiction. These worlds, rather than being used for one romance, were used in an entire cycle of romances, such as the Arthurian, the Charlemagne, and the Amadís cycles.

Although Don Quijote contemplates creating a pastoral world near the end of book II, it is these worlds of chivalric romances which have enthralled his mind. The most famous of such romances was *Amadís de Gaula*, which is loosely based upon the fourteenth-century prose *Lancelot*. The Amadís cycle, written for a religiously dominated society, quickly became a popular, or kidnapped, romance which idealized the feudal world. The influence of the Catholic church in Spain ensured that these romances Christianized both the mystical, or supernatural, side of romance and the problematic concept and conduct of courtly love.

In an attempt to incorporate Christianity into the supernatural aspects of romance, writers began to chronicle the entire history of a cycle, thereby emphasizing the role of Providence over the course of time. The supernatural element was made acceptable, moreover, because it was used for allegorical purposes, instead of being presented as vague and mysterious symbols with inherent "deep meaning." As well, it was incorporated along with the inclusion of historically authentic elements:

> Symbolic meaning and historical experience thus became more closely identified with one another, evincing a tendency for

> narrative incident to be seen as an externalization of a character's moral life, and the story interpreted in consequence as an allegory rather than a history (Williamson 34).

Whereas allegorical meaning and claims of historicity were meant to Christianize romances, they inadvertently opened the way for fantasy. No matter how obscure, improbable, and magical the tale, the author could always defend his work on the grounds of its being Christian and didactic. Nevertheless, the works are questionable because of their concomitant claim of being allegorical *and* historically authentic. It is in this contradiction "fuelled by the didactic alibi, [that] one finds the mechanism of degeneration which will eventually deprive Arthurian romance of aesthetic coherence and make it ripe for Cervantes's satire" (Williamson 37).

In fourteenth-century Spain, where the Church had a stronger role than in the rest of Europe, the didactic alibi became more essential. Moreover, the romances were further Christianized to the extent that the hero is without moral weakness. Amadís, for instance, is based on Lancelot, but, whereas Lancelot falls in love with his king's wife, Amadís loves the king's unmarried daughter. As if to further emphasize Amadís's moral character, the author tells of his reception on *Insula Firma*: although no one has been able to enter the enchanted place of faithful lovers, Amadís succeeds without a struggle.

Along with the strengthened didacticism, there is a failure in preserving the book's organization because of the vast scope of material covered, so that "the author himself appears to lose sight of its cause" (Williamson 40). Although there is a moral aim (or at least a didactic alibi) to the story, what is lacking is a significant crisis or

threat to the stability of the realm: "The world of the *Amadís* is one of incontrovertible certainties and ready meanings; the order of things has been set out and it is periodically checked by a supervisory deity" (Williamson 46). Thus, all the danger is external to character. There is never any doubt of Amadís's fidelity to his beloved Oriana; instead, their union is threatened by external, social concerns. The "incontrovertible certainties", therefore, significantly weaken the overall structure of the work. Amadís's adventures have no symbolic meaning. They merely become a mechanical device to delay the lovers' reunion for as long as possible. There are several points where the tale could end--such as when Amadís discovers his true name and is reconciled with his father, or after he saves Oriana and her father and is rewarded with a night alone with her--but some minor occurrences manage to keep the story going for four books. These forced extensions, however, were one of the aspects of the romance's popularity:

> la mezcla de angustia concreta e inmediata, motivada por el desarrollo de alguna aventura que parece va a terminar mal, y seguridad profunda subyaciente, anclada en la confianza esencial que el lector siente por el héroe (y la heroína), debieron constituir una combinación particualarmente deseable para los lectores de la época (Durán 83).

The problem created by these implausible extensions was obvious to Montalvo when he wrote his version of *Amadís*, and, as a result, he included yet more authorial comments in an attempt to explain away any discrepancies:

> Montalvo's comments and authorial exclamations are themselves a sign that the narrative has begun to lose the capacity to generate for itself any ulterior moral or spiritual significance through symbolism, allegory, or structural organization (Williamson 49).

Caught in this dilemma of spiritual significance at the expense of aesthetic appeal, Montalvo further tries to distance his responsibility for the text. Hence, he will claim from the beginning that his work was "corregióle de los antiguos originales, que estaban corruptos e compuestos en antiquo estilo por falta de los diferentes escriptores" (Montalvo 3). Montalvo's sequel *Esplandían*, along with the further sequels of the offspring of the *Amadís*, written by different authors, show an increasing difficulty with the attempt to deny fictional status through a moral alibi and an absence of necessity in the knights' quests. Thus, the more the romances appear to be furthering a moral purpose, and the more the authors try to disguise the fictional aspects of the romances, the more they become distanced from the original mediaeval romances and open themselves up to criticism or parody. Moreover, with each sequel, the form becomes a more formulaic one, with more established elements: morally fixed characters, and a lyrical-fantastic environment full of court life, magic, far off places and knights on adventures. As the romances continued, the structural and thematic repetitions became more obvious and the only variety was in terms of the supernatural and extraordinary. The Amadís cycle "lo prevé todo con vistas a producir en sus lectores--como, en efecto, debió occurir--dos sensaciones distintas pero complementarias: la *seguridad* y la *evasión* por medio de la fantasía" (Durán 81-82).

The desire to create sensations of security and evasion is also evident in the sentimental and Gothic romances. Added to this is a greater attempt to instill a feeling of terror into the reader. It is interesting to note that in order to increase this feeling

of terror the setting has been moved into a contemporaneous upper class society, allowing a naive reader to feel that this could indeed happen to him. Such a shift in the romance setting and attention to the sublime indicated a change in the romance reader. Initially, the Arthurian romances were written for a noble audience. Deriving from, and responding to the epic, they showed an awareness for a new female readership in the use of the lady as *prima mobila* for the errant knight, thereby replacing the impetus of war and fighting for one's sovereign lord. The role of the lady in the Arthurian and Amadís romances is, however, usually a minor one. These romances still revolve around the knight's adventures in combat, with love and marriage as the reward for success. In the later sentimental and then the Gothic romances, the role of the lady is greatly increased, and her position in society has changed. Royal heroes and heroines are replaced by upper-class characters. As well, the growing middle classes are also appearing more in the romances, reflecting a new readership. The popularity of the romance among this audience is revealed in the new bourgeois morality prevalent in the romance--a morality which is their claim to "true" or "earned" nobility.

Not only is the new readership predominantly middle-class, it is also largely female; hence the centrality of the heroine in many romances. But, whereas the hero's nobility rests on his action, the same quality in the heroine is expressed through a more passive character. To compensate for this change, romance writers needed to create interest through the use of different sensations, namely, suspense and fear. In the sentimental romance, this fear is usually produced through a perceived threat to

the hero or heroine's honour. More than ever, there is an emphasis on describing the emotional turmoil of the protagonist rather than external action. In *Pamela*, for instance, most of the tension is created through Pamela's contemplations (and copious writings) about what will happen when Mr. B. arrives. When he does arrive, in fact, very little happens thanks to Pamela's Christian virtues. Pamela, with all her moral weeping and fainting, manages, like a true romantic heroine, to save herself from that "fate worse than death". Indeed, after having gone through emotional havoc, she manages to marry her Mr. B. She thus attains her "true" noble identity, which, thanks to her virtuous behaviour, the reader is assured she deserves.

The emotional turmoil and fear of the heroine in the aptly-named sentimental novel is reproduced in the Gothic on a much more grandiose scale. The terror of the heroine, and thereby the reader, is increased by taking a contemporaneous heroine and, once more placing her in a distant locale. Most of the action of the Gothic novel usually occurs in an Middle English setting, or an exotic, Catholic country. Such countries, the authors imply, are overflowing with the typical Gothic motif: the decaying mediaeval castle or abbey. When Walpole wrote his romance *The Castle of Otranto: A Gothic Story*, he stated in his preface that he hoped to "blend the two kinds of romance, the ancient and the modern" (Walpole 7). The older aspect romance was retained in the creation of a setting which resembled that of the medieval romances, but which has now grown old; thus, the Gothics were full of ancient and ruined castles.

The Gothic romances also retained the chivalric use of the supernatural. Interestingly enough, moreover, the Gothic use of the supernatural was for a radically different purpose than in the chivalric romances. In the chivalric romance, the supernatural and the 'marvellous' is given the same type of attention as natural occurrences. For the Gothic novelist, however, the use of the 'marvellous' to create sensations of terror or horror in the reader is part of the eighteenth century quest for novel and sublime sensations.

From the old romances, then, the Gothic borrowed the setting and the use of the supernatural. From the modern romances, they incorporated contemporary characters. The sentimental heroine[6] was perfect for this because of her extreme, or exaggerated emotions: "Through heightened sensitivity and refined perception, the Gothic mind encounters a greater intensity or reacts to it" (Bayer-Berenbaum 21). This heightened emotional response plays the role that adventures did in the earlier romances: it keeps the reader involved with the plot despite hundreds of pages devoted to subplots. Naturally, the usual emotion played upon in the romance is fear which at once attracts and repeals the reader.

Unlike the earlier romances which are told through a third-person narrator and stress external actions more than internal emotions, the Gothic, although retaining the

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[6] In discussing the sentimental and Gothic romances, I am emphasizing the role of the heroine at the expense of the hero because Austen's parody appears to be more directed at the female perception of the heroine, who is much more developed than in the first two sub-genres I looked at. Cervantes concentrates more on the role of the hero, and such a shift in Austen reveals that romances had become popular with a different audience.

third-person narrator, emphasizes the emotions of the heroine and frequently focalizes the narrative through her. In Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, for example, the story is told through Emily's fear-driven imagination. These fears, however, are not fully realized into horrific events, and Radcliffe's trademark is a happy ending which rationally explains away the apparent supernatural. Radcliffe's hints and obscure references, in fact, play upon the imagination of the reader as graphic descriptions of horrifying occurrences could not. As McKillop observes,

> Terror and horror ... are so far opposite, that the first expands the soul, and awakens the faculties to a high degree of life; the other contracts, freezes and nearly annihilates them ...; and where lies the great difference between terror and horror, but in the uncertainty and obscurity, that accompany the first respecting the dreaded evil? (McKillop in Varma 103).

Fear, thus, is the primary emotion Radcliffe employs to play upon the imagination of both her heroine and her reader, rather than a realization of that fear.

This realization of fear occurs in the second main phase of the Gothic novel, and is called the *Schauer-Romantik*. Not content with mere suggestions, these Gothic novelists invoke horror aimed at frightening and repulsing the reader. Works such as Beckford's *Vathek* and Lewis's *The Monk* belong to this category. In these works, the gentility of the female Gothic writers is lost and is replaced by greater brutality and more overt sexuality:

> The chords of terror which had tremulously shuddered beneath Mrs. Radcliffe's gentle fingers were now smitten with a new vehemence. The intense school of the *Schauer-Romantiks* improvised furious and violent themes into the orchestra of horror (Varma 129).

Further description of the second phase of the Gothic, I feel, is irrelevant to this essay because Austen limits herself mainly to the Radcliffean model of terror. When her disillusioned heroine contemplates the Gothic novels which had captivated her imagination, she refers to Mrs. Radcliffe's work and the work of her imitators as charming (Austen 200).

The tone of Austen's parody is hinted at in the word "charming". She will not attempt to confront the "uncharming" horror-Gothics, despite her awareness of them: "It was not nearly so easy to handle with ironic detachment as the more ladylike variety of the Gothic novel" (Mudrick 40). Indeed, one can easily find things to mock in the over-imaginative Emily, who finally marries her hero and discovers that the "supernatural" occurrences are rationally explained. There is, on the other hand, nothing amusing in Monk Lewis's innocent Antonia, who is molested and brutally murdered by her own brother, a monk who has made a pact with the devil. The naive (and perhaps sometimes a little vain) fear in a heroine is easier to parody than actualized sadistic cruelty.

Parody

These, then, are the literary forms that Cervantes and Austen have used for parodic purposes. But parody, as Levine wrote, "as a form ... always seems simpler and less serious than it is likely in the end to be." (Levine 337). Thus, suffice it to say that the *OED*'s definition of parody as simply "a ridiculous imitation of a serious literary work", will not aid in an analysis of the authors' use of parody. Instead, for a

more encompassing definition, I will incorporate aspects of Hutcheon's definition of parody: "parody is repetition, but repetition that includes difference; it is imitation with critical ironic distance, whose irony can cut both ways" (Hutcheon 37). In reading Cervantes's and Austen's texts, the reader can see repetition of the romances, but these repetitions are distorted in some way. There is also an imitation, which implies a respect for the romance. Finally, there is a strong feeling of critical ironic distance. The reader is being asked to judge, not just the romance, but also the realistic writing which is parodying the romance genres.

In the next two chapters, I will attempt to show in what similar ways these two realistic parodies of romance are developed and to what end.

The *Quijote*: Don Quijote's Quest for Reality and Meaning Through the Illusion of the Chivalric Romance

The Parodic Key of the Quijote

A salient fact one quickly realizes while reading the *Quijote* is the emphasis Cervantes places on an active role for the reader. Don Quijote, we are told, decided to abandon his identity at the age of 50 and become a knight errant as the direct result of the idle (*ocioso*) *hidalgo* reading too many romances. The first words of the 1605 prologue, moreover, are addressed to the "idle reader" (*desocupado lector*). The *Quijote*, then, although a parody of romance, does not begin by looking at the romance genre, rather it begins by examining romance *readers* - who are supposedly idle, since they are expecting to read a romance, and not in a parodic form - and the nature of reading. Indeed, the entire parody is focused through Don Quijote, a reader who loses his sanity after investing all his time and money on reading and purchasing romances. By thus forcing the reader to perceive Don Quijote as a reader like himself, Cervantes impels one not only to explore the act of reading but also to be a more critically active reader, one, moreover, who is encouraged to participate with the author in the creation of the text. Whereas most romances, especially the Spanish ones, encourage the readers to accept passively the narrative as given, Cervantes introduces a subversive element of reflexivity, highlighting an awareness that is "dialectical, implying a relationship between author and reader which is fraught with ironic possibilities" (Williamson 83).

The awareness that Cervantes's ironic parody is intended to produce is initially set out in the prologue and introductory poems, which create a form of "parodic key," placed to guide the reader from the start. Starting with what appears to be an "apology" for writing a book of such "sterile and ill-cultivated" wit, and encouraging the reader to judge it as he wishes, Cervantes is, in fact, ironically trapping the reader to accept his work. He is taking "the classic stance of the Socratic ironist, cunningly abasing himself the better to lull the presumptuous into a self-betraying complacency" (Williamson 82). Therefore, Cervantes distances himself from the text, claiming to be only the "stepfather" who will not blind himself to its faults:

> pues [tu] ni eres su pariente ni su amigo, y tienes tu alma en tu cuerpo y tu libre alberdrío como el más pintado, y estás en tu casa, donde eres señor, della, como el Rey de sus alcabalas, y sabes lo que comúnmente se dices, que debajo de mi manto al Rey mato (Cervantes 29).

Through this long-winded sentence, of which I have cited only a part, Cervantes encourages the reader to judge as he pleases and to see himself as the king of his own home. Only at the end of this beguiling invitation does Cervantes deliver the twist: the reader is to see himself as the king, but the king who does not please his subjects is killed. With this proverb, Cervantes reveals the ironic nature of his parody, which is specifically designed to upset the confidence of *expecting*, but unsuspecting readers. The idle reader *expects* the transparently given narrative, but does not *suspect* the subversive intrusion of an author critical of what the reader expects, most of his all his expected privacy! Cervantes exposes the uncritical reader's ridiculous expectations.

After this introduction, Cervantes's prologue continues with his ironic burlesque, foreshadowing what will eventuate in the narrative. He explains how he had originally intended to present his book without the usual prologues and introductory poems but that a friend had encouraged him to add them; and he thus, "masterfully 'deconstructs' the prologue itself as a Renaissance genre" (Rivers 31). Beginning by pretending to affirm the custom of filling a prologue with philosophers' maxims and quotations from scripture, Cervantes, in fact, denies these prologues for their inappropriateness and even sacrilegious quality.

A prologue, moreover, is by its very nature textually ambiguous. It is addressed to the reader directly, as if it were an oral speech, and yet it is never delivered as such. It is meant to be the external and historical author, rather than an internal narrator, speaking to an historical reader; at the same time, however, the prologue is a rhetorical tool used to capture the interest of the reader. When Cervantes declares to the reader that this is not a well-written book, and that right now he is having difficulty writing it, there is inherent contradiction, because it has already been written and is being read. And although Cervantes apparently is describing the difficulties of writing prologues, he is indirectly relating it to his novel as well:

> In the prologue we see a writer as an old man trying to write, to invent a new *écriture*, and his struggle becomes the substance of the text; in the novel we see a reader as an old man trying to live what he reads, and his struggles to convert texts into the substance of his life becomes in fact the substance of another supertext (Rivers 32).

Texts, Cervantes implies, become intertwined with life and it becomes questionable how much they can be separated from human existence. This ambiguity of actual reality in relation to textual reality is crucial to an interpretation of the *Quijote*.

Another important aspect to the interpretation of the text is revealed in the friend's advice to the writer "pintando en todo lo que alcanzárse y fuere posible, vuestra intención" (Cervantes 34). The use of the expression "to paint" his intentions depicts an image of a writer who is more concerned with creativity, or imagination, than historical truth. To this end, he "is engaged ... in a form of imaginative self-realization" (Williamson 86). Further, imagination is combined with purpose (intención), thereby implying a relationship of artistic skill and imaginative will (Williamson). In this manner, Cervantes neatly distinguishes mimesis of the author's imagination with that of the reader's sense of it. The result of such a distinction is that Cervantes can avoid the Aristotelian argument in favour of verisimilitude, thereby justifying the free play of the imagination. For Cervantes, the imagination should be allowed its fullest expression, creating sensations of wonder and disillusionment in the reader, uninhibited by the conventional restraints of either a didactic alibi or verisimilitude.

Following the prologue, there is a series of introductory poems. Such poems are not uncommon to romance, but once again, Cervantes uses them to set the tone of his narrative. Usually these poems are meant to be taken seriously and, as such, are meant to glorify the knight of the proceeding narrative. It would be a very unknowledgeable or naive romance reader indeed who would take this poesy

seriously, however, as there are, for example, several poems in which the knight's horses are talking to each other. Once again, Cervantes is preparing the reader how to read the text that follows, so that he can share in a mocking parody of the conventions of the romance.

Parody as Criticism

Lord Byron once claimed that Cervantes's burlesquing of the romance "smiled Spain's chivalry away" (Allen 129). This statement, however, presents a limited view of the function of parody, implying that the Spanish chivalric romances died along with Don Quijote. Such a view does not acknowledge the fact that since the second half of the sixteenth century the romance genre in Spain was steadily losing favour to newer narrative genres, such as the pastoral and the picaresque, as well as a range of dramatic forms. Instead, it would be more accurate to say that Cervantes's parody of chivalric romance presents a turning point for romance, in that it revived a dying form and also challenged it to confront the contemporary Spanish world.

Although the romance was not completely rejected, there were, none the less, aspects which Cervantes felt detracted from the genre, and which he ridiculed, along with the pastoral and picaresque. Through his writing, he brought the romance to the threshold of the seventeenth century, thereby emphasizing the great distance between the reader and the typical romance tale. His hero, Don Quijote, is constantly confronted by this distance, and many of his difficulties in Part I arise from his inability to accept that what once existed cannot exist once more.

Co-existent with this conflict is Don Quijote's inability to distinguish between historical fact and fiction in the romances. This blindness to a poet's use of fiction is mocked in his pastoral speech on the Golden Age of man. As if to reveal the fictionality, along with the poetic nature of such a notion, Cervantes has Don Quijote deliver what is, in fact, a beautiful speech, on the age of pastoral innocence to a group of uneducated shepherds who do not understand a word of it (I, 11). By having such a wonderful speech on the pastoral life of shepherds and shepherdesses fall on the uncomprehending ears of actual shepherds, Cervantes emphasizes that such a notion is, in fact, non-existent in the actual world. More importantly, though, the language of Don Quijote's speech highlights its poetic and imaginative qualities. On another occasion, Don Quijote declares: "yo *imagino* que todo lo que *digo* es así, sin que sobre ni falte nada, y píntola en mi imaginación como la deseo" [emphasis added] (Cervantes, I.xxv.217). Although it is historically false, the beauty of the idea is enough to justify its existence in the poet's imagination. Once again, through Don Quijote, Cervantes praises the poetic imagination, uninhibited by the need to be factual.

It is this distinction between historical fact and poetic imagination which, unperceived by Don Quijote, leads to his madness. This confusion in his perception is further manipulated by the Spanish romance writers' necessity in forwarding a didactic alibi. Thus encouraged to read the romances as historically accurate, Don Quijote is faced with the problem of a reality which does not fit this description. Confronted with this contradiction,

> Don Quixote's enterprise can be interpreted, then, as a kind of mad epistemological argument over the true nature of reality, an argument conducted in the knowledge that other people will not be easily persuaded to a romance view of the world and will inevitably assume that he is seeing things (Williamson 99).

It is not, however, so much that Don Quijote is seeing things, rather that he interprets what he sees differently than everyone else. Accepting the romance world view as accurate, he then proceeds to re-name objects to reflect this view, despite any empirical objections.

This crisis of perception faced by Don Quijote resulted from the great split in fantasy and reality in the Spanish romances as they became a more popular and escapist genre. As an escapist genre,

> romance plunges the readers directly into fantasy without providing a link that connects the characters in any meaningful way with the everyday world. Quest romance [in contrast] ... leads a character into and back out of fantasy ... thereby throwing the emphasis on the character and the transformation he undergoes during his experience in the dream world. Escapist romance ... is basically sensationalist (El Saffar 1985, 240).

Faced with this separation of fantasy and reality, Don Quijote attempts to unite them back into one world. Indeed, for him, there is little difference between these two worlds. Thus, he is just as willing to believe the histories of Amadís and Lancelot as he is those of the fifteenth-century Castilian knights (Cervantes I.xlix.433). Historical *fact*, moreover, is not essential for Don Quijote, because it is *perceived* differently by everyone, as he tells Sancho of Mambrino's helmet:

> ¿es possible que en cuanto ha que andas conmigo, no has echado de ver que todas las cosas de los caballeros andantes parecen quimeras, necedades y desatinos, y que son todas hechas al revés? Y no porque sea ello hecho así, porque andan entre nosotros siempre una caterva de

> encantadores, que todas nuestras cosas mundan y truecan, y las vuelven según su gusto, y según tienen la gana de favorecernos o destruirnos; y así, eso que a ti te parece bacía de barbero, me parece a mí el yelmo de Mambrino, y a otro le parecerá otra cosa (Cervantes, I.xxx.211-212).

With such an overbearing claim regarding the role of enchanters, Don Quijote announces his right to perceive the world as he feels is best. It is not, he is thus saying, his perception which is faulty, rather that everyone's is faulty because of the enchanters. Thanks to his abundant reading of romances, moreover, he alone knows what things should really look like.

Convinced that he knows the "true" nature of reality, Don Quijote begins the novel, and continues throughout Part I, by attempting to unite truth and fantasy once again through giving objects and people names suitable to their "true" status. One example of his re-naming process is in the choosing of a name for his lady:

> Llamábase Aldonza Lorenzo, y a ésta le pareció ser bien darle título dijese mucho del suyo, y que tirase y se encaminase al de princesa y gran señora, vino a llamarla DULCINEA DEL TOBOSO, porque era natural del Toboso; nombre, a su parecer, músico y peregrino y significativo, como todos los demás que a él y a sus cosas había puesto (Cervantes, I.i.49).

By giving things, people, and animals names which are significant, Don Quijote partakes in a futile and mad attempt to return the world to a state where words are transparent signifiers. His adventures become a type of quest to return meaning to words because "[t]he written word and things no longer resemble each other" (Foucault 119).

In order to justify his belief in the chivalric romances, despite what everyone else tells him, Don Quijote will resort to using all the signs around him, including the

negative ones, to *prove* his books: "His adventures will be a deciphering of the world: a diligent search over the entire surface of the earth for the forms that will prove that what his books say are true (Foucault 118). Thus, Don Quijote was obliged to imagine (and thereby create) the evil sorcerer Frestón whose very existence will explain for Don Quijote why the world is enchanted for him alone:

> this magic has been foreseen and described in the books, the illusory difference that it introduces can never be anything but enchanted similitude, and, therefore, yet another sign that the signs in the books really do resemble the truth (Foucault 119).

Through Frestón, then, Don Quijote has a means of explaining why the world has "metamorphosed into a banal travesty of itself" (Williamson 97). By claiming the existence of magic and sorcerers, Don Quijote can believe that his adventures fail because of Frestón, who wishes to hinder his success, as in the examples of the battle with the windmills, the destruction of his library, and in giving his enemies the faces of his dearest friends. For Don Quijote, it justifies why the distance between the signifier and the signified is now opaque, even though Don Quijote can still "hear another, deeper, discourse, which recalls the time when words glittered in the universal resemblance of things" (Foucault 120). It is precisely his belief in this discourse which sets Don Quijote upon his mad quest to prove the truth of the romances. But "truth" itself has been called into question through differing perceptions, multiple levels of fiction and, therefore meaning, and by the opaque character of words.

Don Quijote's madness, which results from his inability to distinguish historical truth and poetic fiction, is of central importance for Cervantes. In the

sixteenth century, there was not as great a concern with separating the two--as the use of the same name, *historia*, shows. It was not only romance novelists who claimed their stories were true in order to appeal to readers; historians frequently would combine legends or fiction within their text. It was not until the middle of the sixteenth century, with the diffusion of Aristotle's *Poetics*, that the blurring of history and fiction became debatable. In the voice of Sansón Carrasco, Cervantes, following Aristotle, argues for a clear distinction of the two: "el poeta puede contar o cantar las cosas, no como fueron, sino como debían ser; y el historiador las ha de escribir, no como debían ser, sino come fueron, sin añadir ni quitar a la verdad cosa alguna" (Cervantes, II.iii.482). Such a distinction allows the poet the freedom of using his imagination in presenting an alternative reality. This reality, however, should not wander too far from the realm of the possible, because the reader's interest will be lost through the lack of credibility.

This preference of works of fiction which are mimetic is revealed during the priest's and the barber's book burning. There is a noted relaxing in their attitude when they finished with the chivalric romances and started on the pastoral. Five of the nine pastoral romances are spared the fire because, unlike the chivalric, they do not attempt to be anything other than fiction. This does not mean, however, that they are spared criticism. The conclusion to Montemayor's *Diana*, which solves all the problems through a *deus ex machina*, is condemned. Thus, Cervantes's concept of good fiction combines the poetic imagination with verisimilitude. To this end, he places Don Quijote and Sancho within the context of the actual social history of

seventeenth- century Spain. This joining of history with poetic imagination became one of the distinguishing features of the modern novel.

Irony and the Author

In parodying a literary genre, both the author and the reader must be familiar with the work or works being parodied and, as well, the reader must be more conscious of the fact that he is engaged in a literary text while reading. Thus, there is frequently, in parody, an element of advertisement on the part of the author. The narrative will direct the reader's attention to the fact that this is a fictitous world, and that the one he creates is more desirable than what is being parodied. In the *Quijote*, Cervantes's preference of realistic genre over the fantastic is revealed through the "parodic key" set forth in the prologue and also in his burlesquing of the romance narrative form.

The form in which the *Quijote* is presented was, critics have shown, not the original intention of Cervantes. It is now generally accepted that he had first planned to write a fairly short story in the style of his *Novelas ejemplares*, which now comprises the first eight chapters of Part I, and depicts a *hidalgo* who loses his sanity by reading too many chivalric romances. After beginning the novella, Cervantes evidently saw the potential for an extensive parody of the romance genre. Such a parody retained the initial intention of mocking a naive reader, but it also added a more detailed burlesque of the narrative formula. To this end, much of the irony in the *Quijote* is at the expense of the mad knight and comes not only from characters in

the story but from the pseudo-author himself. These jokes about his knight are of such a kind that he becomes "the most significant ironic [adversary] Don Quixote encounters" (Williamson 145). There are two distinct methods in which Cervantes employs irony in the narrative: the first being through authorial comments, and the second through the burlesquing of the romance narrator.

The ironic authorial comments usually take the form of a direct contradiction, or a variation of this. When Don Quijote declares what something is, the narrator or another character will then call it something else. Such as, for example, when Don Quijote declares he sees two armies approaching, Sancho says that he only sees two herds of sheep. A frequent, and more subtle, variation of this is for the narrator to combine Don Quijote's words with his in one sentence in a straightforward manner. One instance of this occurs in Part I, when Don Quijote insists upon seeing inns as castles. On one occasion, the narrator states: "don Quijote se salió fuera de la venta a hacer la centinela del castillo, como lo había prometido" (Cervantes, I.xlii.383). The subtleness of this variation increases the potential irony, but a more fruitful variation occurs when it is employed by another character, frequently Sancho. When used in this way, Cervantes can ironize the two characters for different reasons: one for his idealistic belief and the other for his mercantile attitude.

Although the chivalric romance is the main focus of the narrative, Cervantes does not limit himself to parodying this form. In Part I, Don Quijote and Sancho frequently come across characters who also live as if they were in romances. Such an inclusion, to the extent that he appears to "apologize" for it in Part II, nevertheless

served three important functions. It allowed him, first, to overcome the limitations of writing exclusively within one genre, secondly, to contrast those confined genres with his lively narrative style, and finally to show how literature is starting to affect how people view their own life. Cardenio and Dorothea fit into this category of characters who attempt to live in a pastoral romance in order to solve their problems with their lovers. They will tell their stories to anyone who will listen, and it is interesting to note that they are allowed to do so in the typical romance form, unlike Don Quijote's story. As well, these characters are allowed to be reunited with their lovers after an appropriate amount of suffering and explaining their problems to everyone they encounter. The intrusion of typical romance narrative into the middle of Cide Hamete's story about Don Quijote highlights for Cervantes's readers, in the most direct way possible, the difference and superiority of his new form of writing:

> The narrow literary dogmas of decorum and style reflect a now obsolete world-view arranged on hierarchical lines. *Don Quixote* is an ironic vision in which the old world-view is compounded with one that is essentially modern, with the ideally exalted and the basely material coexisting as distinct but separate parts of human experience (Riley 145).

The narrow literary style of the romance narrator is replaced by Cervantes's second means of employing irony, with the creation of a narrator who is as much a fictional character as Don Quijote and, thereby, forcing the reader to be aware of the fictional nature of the story. Moreover, Cervantes emphasizes that the character of Don Quijote is also dependent upon the invention of a narrator to tell his story: "[p]ara mí sola nació don Quijote, y yo para él; él supo obrar, y yo escribir; solos los dos somos para en uno" (Cervantes, II.lxxiv.916). This narrator, who is as much a

character, then, as Don Quijote, becomes the means through which Cervantes parodies romance: first, in the manner of the discovery of Cide Hamete's manuscript, and, secondly, in his style of narration. Cide Hamete first appears in Chapter ix, the point at which Cervantes expanded upon the original novella, in a manner which directly mocks the romance. The story had broken off in the previous chapter, apparently because the rest of the document was lost. After much searching, we are told, the conclusion to the story, rather than being discovered in an ancient house, is found in an Arabic manuscript by Cide Hamete Benengeli at an outside market in Toledo. Far from there being an attempt at asserting the veracity of this manuscript, Cervantes has insured that it will be questionable on two accounts: the text must be translated into Spanish, thereby removing it once more from its source; and, the author, Cide Hamete, is an Arab, thus calling into question the truth of what he writes for a sixteenth century Roman Catholic Spanish reader.

Cide Hamete's style of narration, furthermore, is unlike that of the typical romance. Although attempting to write a chivalric romance, Cide Hamete, unlike most romance writers, is not omnipotent. In fact, at times, he appears to be learning of events at the same times as the characters do. For example, in the *Quijote* of 1605, the priest and the Barber initially encounter Dorothea disguised as a man and naturally assume she is one. The narrator's description of her, however, reveals that he is also under the assumption that she is a man. By restricting the knowledge of his narrator, Cervantes also limits the information he presents to the reader and it is "[t]his

stepping aside of the author that gives a sense of perspectivism to the work [and] also creates an atmosphere of irony " (El Saffar 1980, 142).

The deliberate ambiguity and irony regarding the accuracy of the manuscript derides the later chivalric romance writers, such as Montalvo, for their insistent claims of veracity and use of a didactic alibi. Cervantes's renunciation of the mixing of scriptural didacticism with obvious fantastic narratives was first seen in the 1605 prologue, but Cervantes's aim is not so much the denial of fantasy or imagination as the denunciation of the inappropriate mixing of fantasy with religion. He is, in fact, praising the imagination which is uninhibited by overt (and fictitious) claims of historicity. Thus, the prologue, and the narrative, amount "to a defence of the imagination, a vindication of the writer's creative freedom from the dead hand of verisimilitude, historicity, or didacticism" (Williamson 88).

Another element of the didactic quality in the Spanish romances which Cervantes criticizes is the use of *interlacement*, which, in the later romances, has become simply a loose episodic narrative that lacks any meaning for the knight other than those which the author claims as examples of divine providence. This critique of the errant knight's adventures is particularly evident in the *Quijote* of 1605. Don Quijote's and Sancho's sallies take them from adventure to misadventure with no other rhyme or reason than mere chance. Unlike the chivalric writers, Cervantes does not attempt to create elaborate excuses for their journeys. A further element mocked in the abuse of the *interlacement* is the growing use of inserted stories which have little direct relation to the main protagonists of the tale: Cervantes inserts stories to

which Don Quijote and Sancho had no connection other than that they are sometimes present when they are being told.

Although the various inserted stories in Part I and the theatrical shows in Part II appear not always to have a direct relationship with the protagonists, they do serve to emphasize Cervantes's interest in the relationship of a story's narrator and audience, or reader. Cervantes creates multiple levels of fiction through characters who "tell stories and create plays for one another, ... the reader thus finds, duplicated in the text, the relationship between author, character and audience in which he, on another level, participates" (El Saffar 1980, 143). This dialectical relationship is of interest in the Spanish romances because it is that interplay of supply and demand which produced the Amadís cycle and similar cycles, such as Ortúñez de Calahorra's *Espejo de príncipes* (1555). The *Quijote*, then, burlesques the Spanish chivalric romance through obliging the reader to notice, even if while laughing, the inconsistencies and flaws which had become ingrained into the entire narrative form, due to both poor writing and audience expectations.

Sancho Panza as Ironic Comedian

Paradoxically, the character who laughs the most at romance is also the one who benefits the most from it. As his closest companion, Sancho Panza's role in manipulating Don Quijote and creating irony was evident already in the first book when he is given the job, despite his illiteracy, of being Don Quijote's squire. Because of his illiteracy, Don Quijote must explain the nature of chivalric romance to

his squire. The introduction of a companion for Don Quijote who is so far removed from the romance world, moreover, allows Cervantes to juxtapose romance ideals with mundane actuality and practical "common sense". Such a juxtaposition allows for humour as, for example, when Don Quijote, after his memorable battle with the windmills, declares to Sancho that a knight never complains of pain. Such noble sentiments, however, are lost on Sancho, and he replies, "sabe Dios si yo me holgara que vuestra merced se quejara cuando alguna cosa le doliera. De mí sé decir que me ha de quejar del más pequeño dolor que tenga, si ya no se entiende también con los escuderos de los caballeros andantes eso del no quejarse" (Cervantes, I.xviii.85). Don Quijote, who is never shown with a sense of humour in the first sally, is also forced to see the humour in his squire.

The potential irony and humour Sancho brings to the situation are increased because Don Quijote wants his uneducated servant to learn to act in a manner appropriate to a squire. In this instance, he reassures his squire that, as nothing is said about a knight's squire complaining of pain, he should feel free to do so. Since this is in keeping with Sancho's natural desires, the situation is allowed to pass. On other occasions, though, Sancho is oblivious to his master's teaching, and obeys, as always, his natural inclinations. To overcome this, Don Quijote will use force and threats to coerce Sancho into becoming a proper squire. The social distance which Don Quijote is attempting to enforce with Sancho results in "Sancho's emerging sense of scepticism about Don Quixote's enterprise and, more especially, his ironic expression of this" (Williamson 140). Aware of his master's madness, and also fond of

expressing his own ideas, Sancho cannot help voicing his opinions, despite being forbidden to talk, and is therefore, often forced to resort to ironic comments on the sly rather than direct responses to his master.

The crucial change in Don Quijote's and Sancho's relationship occurs during the events at the fulling mill when Sancho realizes that he can manipulate his master, so long as he does so within the romance parameters. Not only does Sancho manage to convince Don Quijote to delay his adventure until daylight, but he also insults his master by relieving himself by his side. When Don Quijote becomes curious, Sancho artfully avoids responding truthfully by suggesting it is part of the mystery they are to investigate. In this manner, Sancho "mockingly converts his digestive travails both verbally and acoustically into a brief ironic travesty of his master's adventure-seeking" (Williamson 142).

From this point forward, Sancho improves upon his abilities to deceive and to mock his master. When asked by Don Quijote to describe Dulcinea, Sancho is forced to lie because he never saw her. Aware, to a certain degree, of what his master wants to hear, Sancho provides a picture of his meeting with the lady Dulcinea, but one that is a "rather rickety superstructure of romance reality beyond immediate experience" (Williamson 144). He thereby, once again, ironically subverts his master's beliefs and expectations of a romance lady without Don Quijote's suspecting his duplicity.

Thus, although Don Quijote initially created his role as knight, his complete immersion in the illusion allows others to turn his illusions back upon him. Don Quijote becomes, in Part II, incapable of controlling the illusion once he has set it

loose: "Don Quixote, to the extent that he identifies with the self he has invented, is incapable of manipulating illusion and becomes its victim" (El Saffar 1980, 144). As Don Quijote must accept the supernatural in order to attempt to explain the world, he finds himself in Part II, lost and trapped in the illusions of others. The irony of Don Quijote's situation is intensified because he feels himself, the only believer in romances, to be the only one without supernatural aid. The result of this situation is that the whole of Part II takes on a pervasive melancholy feeling.

During the first part of the *Quijote*, Don Quijote's optimism with regards to his quest never wanes. He is confident that success will come soon. In Part II, however, there is a distinct change in Don Quijote's attitude and actions as he attempts to revive the chivalric age. His viewing of Rocinante's neighing as an omen of success (II.iv.488) sets the tone which Cervantes's parody will now take. There is, in Part II, as there never was in the first part, a large emphasis on omens, dreams, fortune-telling, and supernatural occurrences, and Cervantes directs his parody at two fundamental aspects of chivalric romance: that the hero is guided by some providential force, and that the spiritual world directly intervenes to support the hero. Without these two aspects, "romance will founder in a chaos of destructive irony, duplicity, and indeterminacy of meaning" (Williamson 111).

In the early courtly romances, magic and the supernatural were only one means of creating, or explaining, confusion in the world. The world of *Amadís*, however, changed all this. Now, any intervention of the supernatural had to be Providential, destroying any attempt at verisimilitude and increasing the escapist and

sensationalistic aspect of romance. Willing to believe the role of the supernatural as presented in the world of romance, Don Quijote opens himself up to illusions created by others. It was through just such an illusion that the priest and barber contrived to return Don Quijote to La Mancha at the end of Part I. His return, locked in a cage, which he believes was the result of his evil enchanters, foreshadows the pervasive tone which dominates in Part II and dictates the nature of his adventures.

In Part I, Don Quijote believed his role was to return chivalry to the world, and also, to ensure that all the honour went to his lady Dulcinea. In his first adventure in Part II, however, Don Quijote becomes trapped in an illusion created by Sancho, who convinces him that his lady has been "enchanted" into a servant girl (II.x.520). Don Quijote's quest now must be to return her to her proper state before he can continue on his quest. It is at this point, when he sees what has happened to his lady, that much of the excitement and energy leaves Don Quijote. Moreover, his dependence upon his squire is further increased because he can can apparently see Dulcinea in her proper state but he has, in fact, made up the enchantment story to hide his earlier lie at the end of Part I.

The control exercised by Sancho is also seen in most of the other characters in Part II. Don Quijote loses most of his autonomy in Part II and is flung back and forth at the whims of others who manipulate the romance formula. At the end, he is finally forced to return to La Mancha after being defeated in his duel with Sansón Carrasco, who pretended to be the *caballero de la Blanca Luna* (the knight of the White Moon). When home, Don Quijote's madness disappears as he approaches death. With his

sanity regained, he finally admits who he is and rejects the chivalric romances declaring,

> yo no soy don Quijote de la Mancha, sino Alonso Quijano, a quien mis costumbres me dieron renombre de *Bueno*. Y soy enemigo de Amadís de Gaula y de toda la infinita caterva de su linaje; ya me son odiosas todas las historias profanas de la andante caballería; ya conozco mi necedad y el peligro en que me pusieron haberlas leído; ya por misericordia de Dios, escarmentando en cabeza propia, las abomino (Cervantes, II.lxxiv.912).

With this declaration, Don Quijote dies along with his dream to bring the chivalric world into his own times.

The Aesthetic Quality of Romance

When Don Quijote's madness lifts and he becomes again Alonso Quijano, his complete rejection of chivalric romances, to the extent that he forbids his niece to marry anyone who knows of them, is not shared by the reader. There is inherent in the parodic genre an element of respect for the genre it is parodying. The reader is thus encouraged to cry along with Sancho, acknowledging that something perished which, although flawed, had a desirable side as well. Indeed, that Cervantes also felt that there was some worth in romance is not only evident in the fact that Cervantes wrote two romances, but that in the *Quijote*, the "ideal world of romance.... provides both the work's narrative form and much of its imaginative energy" (Beer 41). Moreover, Cervantes's criticism is not a general condemnation of romance--note that not all of Don Quijote's library was burnt: *Amadís*, the first of the Spanish chivalric romances was spared, rather it is limited to those which were poor imitations and

created merely to entertain the senses: "A far deeper preoccupation of Cervantes was the substitution of deceptively enchanting virtuosity for the search for genuine insight into the human condition that had characterized Spanish letters earlier in the century" (Gilman 104). There are two important aspects inherent in the romance which Cervantes implies can be, indeed, used for better writing: the first concerns the structural form of the romance, and the second deals more with the romance's content.

In the Canon of Toledo's defense of the romance, there is a similar praise of its potential and criticism of those writers who did not attempt to teach along with the creation of something pleasureable. The Canon, in fact, refers to the romance as potentially the greatest literary form:

> siendo esto hecho con apacibilidad de estilo y con ingeniosa invención, que tire lo más que fuere posible a la verdad, sin duda compondrá una tela de varios y heromosos lizos tejida, que, después de acabada, tal perfección y hermosura muestre, que consiga el fin mejor que se pretende en los secritos, que es enseñar y deleitar juntamente, come ya tengo dicho. Porque la escritura desatada destos libros da lugar a que el autor pueda mostrarse épico, lírico, trágico, cómico, con todas aqeullas partes que encierran en sí las dulcísismas y agradables ciencias de la poesía y de la oratoria; que la épica también puede escribirse en prosa como en verso (Cervantes, I.xlvii.422).

Despite the possibilities of the romance genre, the Canon admits he did not finish his, because it would have been wasted on the audience which could possibly like the poorly written ones that were in vogue.

One of the main aspects of the romance which the Canon likes, is that it allows the author an opportunity to display his talent. This praise of the expression of an author's talent and imagination is also evident in Cervantes's 1605 prologue, where

the friend advises the writer, "Si lo tiene que aprovecharse de la imitación en lo que fuese escribiendo, que cuanto ella fuere más perfecta, tanto mejor será lo que se escribiere" (Cervantes 33). Such comments, taken separately, could be taken as another criticism of the over-imaginative romance writers. When viewed, however, along with the totality of the novel which attempts to create *admiratio* through the knight's madness, and thereby individualize him, Cervantes's vision of a new romance is revealed. It is "through the individualization of Don Quixote [that] Cervantes fosters curiosity about the knight's unique motivation, and thus opens the way to the development of character" (Williamson 160).

Along with a curiosity of the knight's motives, there is a sympathetic bond created with the reader because Don Quijote's madness becomes a source of nobility. His insanity is not only a result of reading too many romances, but also of an awareness of the faults in his society which he hopes to overcome through becoming a romance knight. Thus, Don Quijote's insanity lies more in his actions than in his words and values. It is not, thus, his ideals and desires which are at fault, but the means by which he tries to realize his ideals, a distinction noticed by some of the characters, such as the innkeeper and the Canon of Toledo. It is lost, though, on others, such as the Duke and Duchess in Part II. Although these characters have a claim to nobility by birth, their treatment of Don Quijote makes it questionable. A strong example of how Cervantes highlights their careless cruelty is seen in the incident of the cats, which they have sent to scare Don Quijote. Unfortunately, their scheme backfires and Don Quijote is injured by the frightened animals. The brutal

carelessness of these nobles is further accentuated by Don Quijote's behaviour prior to the attack. Being seduced by Altisidora, the Duchess's servant, Don Quijote is in the process of responding to this in a poetic romance form. The beauty of the mad knight's poem forcefully contrasts with the noble's cruelty, and even they are obliged to admit they have gone too far. (Cervantes, II.xlvi.744). This combination of madness and nobility creates conflicting sensations of laughter and *admiratio* in the reader with regards to Don Quijote; and it is this emotional conflict which makes it impossible to see the tale as merely an ironic parody and at the expense of romance.

As soon as there is any sympathy for the paradoxically mad but noble knight, the reader is obliged to look for something other than irony to find what Cervantes is doing with his parodic romance. A closer look at Don Quijote attacking the windmills, attempting to save a boy from a cruel master, or being at the mercy of the Duke and Duchess begs the question of whom Cervantes is really criticizing: is it Don Quijote's idealism or the corrupt society he is fighting? Such a question brings us to another aspect of parody, that of satire, which "frequently uses parody as a vehicle for ridiculing the vices or follies of humanity, with an eye to their correction" (Hutcheon 54). Thus, there is, especially in Part II, a growing feeling of nostalgia and a sense that something is lost in the transition from a feudal to mercantile society. Nobility once implied a responsibility for the welfare of the lower classes, whereas Don Quijote's betters seem more concerned with their own amusement. Furthermore, mercantilism has brought with it the emphasis on writing, thereby the concept of *trawth*, where one's word was his oath, is lost. The farmer can easily promise Don

Quijote that he will stop beating the boy, André, and then continue after he has left, because nothing was signed on paper. The windmills, moreover,--Don Quijote's giants--are a sign of the growth of mercantilism. To a *hidalgo* who belongs to a class which discourages working and lives off the income of his land, windmills and fulling-mills result in a loss of land, and therefore income; and, more importantly, they foreshadow death of an older way of life.

Don Quijote and the Romance Reader

The charm of escapist literature is precisely that: it allows the reader to temporarily escape from his own reality into a soothing world. When Garci Rodríguez de Montalvo published his version of *Amadís* in 1492, its success, and that of its offspring, proved that it provided just such a

> welcome escape for its Spanish readers (barbers, priests, canons, young village hidalgos condemned by their privileged status to idleness and marginal poverty), readers, who like Montalvo, remembered vividly (or had heard about it from their elders) that last flourish of chivalric prowess in the peninsula (Gilman 4).

These chivalric romances were the perfect antidote for readers such as Don Quijote, who were caught and held powerless in a quickly changing world. Moreover, the advent of the printing press ensured that more such romances could be produced at an ever-increasing rate and at a more moderate price, for what appeared to be an insatiable audience. This audience was a different one from that which first heard the chivalric romances' predecessor, the courtly romances. Such romances were read to a group, whereas the latter ones were mostly meant for a private audience of one. A

chivalric romance reader could peruse the tales in private, and "the more it read and was provided with reading, the better it learned how to immerse itself in the printed page and to derive therefrom unprecedented 'volupté'" (Gilman 4).

Thus the *Quijote*, written a century later, was for an audience well used to private reading and to immersing itself into a text, an audience which, despite laughing at Don Quijote and at his naive perception of a romance narrative, could understand how he read. Several attempts have been made by critics to determine exactly who read romances, but of more direct interest is not who read them, rather *how* they read them. Perhaps one of the best examples of this is in the *Quijote* of 1615, where the mad knight (and the romance reader) witnesses a puppet show on the romance of Sir Gaiferos who freed his wife Melisendra from the Moors. The show's narrator claims that the tale is a "verdadera historia," and Don Quijote's response reveals his acceptance of this statement. He objects to the narrator on a few occasions, when he embellishes on the tale and at the use of handbells, saying that Moors do not use them and therefore to use them is nonsensical.

Such protests to the irregular variations reflect the important impact the readers have on romances: they want to see what they already know, and any variation must be in keeping with the established parameters of the romance world. Later, Don Quijote becomes so involved in the story that he attacks the puppets to aid the escape of Sir Gaiferos and his wife. When Don Quijote becomes cognisant of what he has done, he offers to pay for the damage to the puppets; however, when the puppet master requests money for the destruction of Melisendra's nose and eye, Don

Quijote refuses to pay. Inherently accepting the truth of the tale he knows so well, Don Quijote cannot separate this version of the tale from the original where Melisendra and Sir Gaiferos escape, and he accuses the puppet master of trying to cheat him. The inability, or perhaps lack of desire on the part of the romance reader, to see the potential quest side of romance, which was originally part of the chivalric romances, largely contributed to the romance's deterioration.

In describing the complete immersion while reading, Susan Sontag wrote that the *Quijote* was "the first and greatest epic about addiction" (Sontag in Gilman 7). It is just this "addiction" to a certain type of reading of a certain type of narrative which Cervantes is exploring in his novel. Thus his protagonist is a reader who becomes so addicted to the world created within his texts that he cannot function any longer in his actual society. As a result Don Quijote embarks on a series of adventures, or "sallies," in order to change society into a romance world.

Traditionally critics have divided the *Quijote* into three sections, based upon his three different "sallies" to bring romance back to the world. These divisions also reflect a significant change in narrative style and intention on the part of the author. The first sally (consisting of the first eight chapters) was, as I have already stated, probably originally meant to be a novella, and as such it is not until the end of the section that we see the emergence of the traits that will turn the *Quijote* into a subject worthy of sustaining interest at the length of a novel. Two important changes occur at the beginning of the second sally. The first relevant change is the introduction of Don Quijote's squire, Sancho. In the first sally, Don Quijote travels alone and never

had any serious relations with anyone he met. Most of the "conversation" was a monologue Don Quijote carried on with himself, describing his future exploits in typical stylized, archaic romance language.

With the arrival of Sancho, however, this undergoes a radical change. Sancho has never read a chivalric romance and therefore cannot understand Don Quijote's language; thus he is forced to "modernize" his speech. Along with this, Sancho brings a practical concern to the sallies. He wants proper meals and a good bed to sleep in. More importantly, though, a companion for Don Quijote means someone with whom he can talk about adventures after the event. The ensuing dialogues regarding their adventures add an element of self-consciousness, which was not evident in romance, and which is communicated to the reader. As the two characters relive their adventures through dialectic speech, they feel themselves to be "alive" and thereby allow the reader to believe such as well.

The second crucial change arises when the narrator is describing Don Quijote in the middle of a battle and near to death. Suddenly, the narrative breaks off and the reader is told, "Pero está el daño de todo esto, que en este punto y término deja pendiente el autor desta historia esta batalla, disculpándose que no halló más escrito destas hazañas de don Quijote, de las que deja referidas" (Cervantes, I.viii.89). Such breaks at the end of a chapter or volume are not uncommon to the chivalric romances and are no more than obvious attempts at increasing the reader's interest to continue reading. Indeed, such "cliff hangers" are still frequently used during season finales of television shows to ensure they will have an audience after the end of the summer.

What is so important about this break, however, is that it is here that the reader first realizes that the person they thought was the "author" is, in fact, a reader who wants to know the conclusion of the battle as much as he does. The story of the *Quijote* is narrated to the reader not by an all-knowing author but by an eager reader who is writing down translations of the original Arabic, hence we are getting the tale "third hand" from an interested reader. This reader, then, becomes our companion as we read the *Quijote*, and our only other authority is Cide Hamete, who is suspected of being a liar. The reader, thus, has no "authority" other than himself with which to interpret the story.

The importance of the reader is further increased when Sancho and Don Quijote prepare for their third sally. Before they leave, Carrasco informs them that a book about their adventures had already been written, although, supposedly, there was only one month interval between the second and third sallies. Upon hearing about the publication, Don Quijote is anxious to know if it is an accurate and truthful account. Sancho and Don Quijote find fault with the text and attempt to explain the discrepancies, thereby distinguishing themselves as "real" and "fictional" characters. This attempt is escalated when they discover that another, false history was written about their future adventures in Zaragosa. In order to prove this false, Don Quijote decides to go to Barcelona instead, in an attempt to become free from the confines of a textual reality, just as his creator, Cervantes, combined the different romance genres to free his narrative from the narrow constraints of the various forms.

Cervantes and the Proto-Novel

To criticize a genre through parody does not require the expansive work which became the *Quijote*. A short novella would have sufficed for that purpose. By expanding his work into a novel, which combined several genres, Cervantes went beyond simple parody and wrote what was often to be considered the first novel. Thus, we can see in the *Quijote*, his playing with and discovering different techniques with which he can interest a reader, besides using adventure. As Wilder remarks,

> To read the first half of the First Part of *Don Quixote*, then, is to watch Cervantes discovering that the interest of fiction does not have to depend on any external importance offered by its happening--neither on surprise nor on suspense, nor novelty, nor complicated intrigue--the long consecrated structural rhetoric of narration (Gilman 18).

The interest in the novel, rather, lies in that interplay between the author and the reader. As Gilman states, "this constant and imperative need of interpretation is precisely what makes the *Quijote* a novel from the beginning of the second sally until the end of the book" (Gilman 120). The reader is drawn into the novel for the very reasons that it differs from a romance. As the canon says, he has started many romances but never finished one because of boredom. The predictability of the romance is replaced with the constant need for the reader to discover what is actually happening in the text.

The consciousness-raising of the reader through the distance between the "author" and reader is one of the large influences that the *Quijote* had on the modern novel. Such a distance, along with the different levels of narrative, opens the text up to a multiplicity of interpretations, rather than to one fixed meaning set by an all-

controlling author: "the movement away from the classical preoccupation with establishing the authority of a narrative to an exploration of the fertile possibilities in the management and manipulation of point of view" (Allen 133-34). Thus, through manipulating perspectives, Cervantes forces the readers to look again not only at what he reads, but at how he reads, in order to be in a better position to see and, therefore, to judge accurately.

It is by foregrounding the roles of reading and writing over the content of the text itself that Cervantes was able to parody the romance genre. This self-conscious role of the author was picked up by the early eighteenth-century novelists as they tried to define the genre of the novel. As Cervantes had over a century earlier, they used parody not only to criticize other genres but to highlight their own. Fielding was but one of many who declared his book, *Joseph Andrews* was "Written in Imitation of the Manner of CERVANTES, Author of *Don Quixote*". Such parodies did follow the "manner" of Cervantes in that their works were more than a mere criticism of other genres. Like Cervantes, they attempted to find new ways of achieving *admiratio* which did not rely on the supernatural.

Characterization, rather, became of more interest along with plausible development of plot and depiction of milieu. Don Quijote provided future novelists with the example of the lone character, isolated and "out of phase not only with his time and place but with his own self" (El Saffar 1980, 146). It is his quest for identity in and the understanding of an ever-changing world which becomes central to Cervantes's novel and to the novels that follow. Cervantes's novel gave the literary

world one in which the security of the romance world is replaced by a realistic fictional world which represents the actual world, in so far as adventure has become rhetorical expression, and the words of such expressions are full of multiple, variable, and contradictory meanings.

Northanger Abbey: Catherine's Quest for Gothic Illusion Amidst Reality

The Nature of Parody in Northanger Abbey

A cursory look at the interpretations of the *Quijote* across the centuries reveals that Cervantes certainly was successful in his attempt to create a fictional world full of multiple and contradictory meaning. Seventeenth-century critics saw in Don Quijote a character whose madness was the means of parodying the romance, whereas the Romantics saw the errant knight as the positive expression of a man attempting to free himself from the confines of society. In the eighteenth century, writers such as Fielding saw the Quijote image as a means for the author to express his own values. In order to expand on the possibilities of a Quijote figure, Fielding replaced madness with naiveté, thus allowing the parodic novel to take a step closer towards realism. Fielding was only one of many authors in the eighteenth century who imitated Cervantes's style of parody as they attempted to define the genre of the novel. Another such parody, which closer follows Cervantes's theme of a naive romance reader, is Charlotte Lennox's *The Female Quixote, or the Adventures of Arabella* (1752), in which the heroine, isolated from society, is nearly destroyed by her belief in the veracity of the medieval romances and in their relevance to contemporary social relations.

Although there are no records of Jane Austen's having read Cervantes's novel, she was well aware of such parodies through works such as Lennox's *Female Quixote*. Rather than parodying the older and less well-known genres, however, Jane Austen aimed her parody at the thriving genres of the sentimental and Gothic

romances. Moreover, unlike in Charlotte Lennox's parody, there is in *Northanger Abbey* a greater concern with the authorial influence on reader response, which unites Austen more with writers such as Fielding, and especially Cervantes. Indeed, in *Northanger Abbey*, there is a similar narrative reflection to that of the *Quijote*, revealing an awareness of the self-conscious nature of the parodic genre. The reader is sensible from the beginning that this is a story, and we are being told about a fictional "heroine" rather than an actual person. Like Cervantes, moreover, Austen begins her novel by calling attention to the role of the reader. There is a distinct difference between the two, however, in that Cervantes was assuming one type of reader--that of the romance. Austen, in contrast, was writing for two different readers simultaneously: "the naive reader of romance who would expect a heroine to be an orphan and to engage in 'the more heroic enjoyments of infancy, nursing a dormouse, feeding a canary-bird, or watering a rosebush'; and the more sophisticated reader who rejects romance and who knows a parody when he sees one" (Wallace 262). Austen knew that her audience had experience not only in reading romances but also in reading an abundance of parodies, unlike Cervantes's readers who might, if he were lucky, have been aware of Ariosto's romance epic. Two centuries of readers separate the assumed readers of Cervantes's and Austen's texts and the development of reading over that time is taken into consideration in Austen's text.

There is, nevertheless, a great similarity in how Austen and Cervantes play with the reader's expectations. Both have as a central character a naive reader who is used to encourage readers to laugh at themselves and, thereby, to take a more active

role in the reading of the text. The ability to see oneself in Catherine Morland is encouraged because, like Cervantes, Austen plays with the notions of fiction and truth. Thus, although the reader is encouraged from the beginning to see Catherine as fictional, there is a continual oscillation in the reader's mind as she gradually "comes alive" and then is forced to be fictional, once again, whenever the reader starts to become too involved in her story. This is seen, for instance, at the end of Chapter xi, when Austen reduces Catherine to a fictional character of a novel by asserting her own role as author and creator: "And now I may dismiss my heroine to the sleepless couch, which is the true heroine's portion; to a pillow strewed with thorns and wet with tears" (Austen 90). Catherine's pain, thus, becomes reduced to a burlesque of the sentimental heroine who, like Richardson's *Pamela*, will burst into tears at the slightest provocation.

Austen's burlesque of the romance's absurdities was evident already in her Juvenilia. "Love and Freindship," written when she was fourteen, destroys the sentimental romance through unceasing irony and endless ridicule. In *Northanger Abbey*, however, there is a clear difference in her use of irony and parody. She goes beyond pure mockery in an attempt to formulate her definition of the novel. This definition is achieved through a parody which, at times, ironizes the romance and, at other times, satirizes her society. To achieve this double purpose, Austen follows a method similar to that of Cervantes, that is, to bring the romance setting into a contemporary one so that the two world views are brought into direct conflict through the naive reader.

A Gothic Set in England?

A typical Gothic novel can contain "in generous amounts and in any combination, castles and abbeys, or their desolate ruins" (Dimić 144). The Gothic convention of placing the hero or heroine in the remains of a foreign castle or an abbey in order to heighten his or her mental distress is one of the central aspects of Austen's parody. As if to set up the reader's expectations for a traditional Gothic, she gives her novel the title *Northanger Abbey*. Despite the title, however, Austen keeps the reader in suspense about the location of the abbey and about when her heroine will actually go there. Before she enlightens the reader, however, she places her heroine in the conventional English resort of Bath for the first hundred-odd pages. There are only hints of possibly seeing a traditional Gothic haunt, which has become a tourist attraction:

> "Blaize Castle!" cried Catherine; "what is that?"
> "The finest place in England - worth going fifty miles at any time to see."
> "What, is it really a castle, an old castle?"
> "The oldest in the kingdom."
> "But is it like what one reads of?"
> "Exactly - the very same."
> "But now really - are there towers and long galleries?"
> "By the dozens."
> "Then I should like to see it; but I cannot - I cannot go." (Austen 85).

Although Catherine's desire to see a castle "like what one reads of" is thwarted, Austen is kind to her heroine, and to her reader, so that when General Tilney invites her to his home, it turns out to be Northanger Abbey.

With this manipulation of events, Austen not only appeases her heroine, but also plays up to the expectations of the reader, who has been waiting through all of

Volume One to discover if the title refers to a Gothic convention. Once aware that she will be going to an abbey, Catherine's imagination further plays with the reader's expectations, making him doubt if Volume Two will actually parody after all:

> To see and explore either the ramparts and keep of the one, or the cloisters of the other, had been for many weeks a darling wish, though to be more than the visitor of an hour, had seemed too nearly impossible to desire. And yet, this was to happen. With all the chances against her of house, hall, place, park, court, and cottage, Northanger turned up an abbey, and she was to be its inhabitant. Its long, damp passages, its narrow cells and ruined chapel, were to be within her daily reach, and she could not entirely subdue the hope of some traditional legends, some awful memorials of an injured and ill-fated nun (Austen 141).

Catherine's description and expectations of exploring the abbey bring to the reader's mind Radcliffe's Emily as she wanders through Udolpho:

> ... she threw aside the book, and determined to explore the adjoining chambers of the castle. Her imagination was pleased with the view of ancient grandeur, and an emotion of melancholy awe awakened all its powers, as she walked through rooms, obscure and desolate, where no footsteps had passed probably for many years (Radcliffe 248).

Moreover, the wish for traditional stories of an "ill-fated nun" recalls yet another traditional Gothic story, that of Lewis's Sister Agnes, who, while presumed dead, is actually locked beneath an abbey, punished for her sins:

> The steps were so narrow and uneven, that to descend them was like walking down the side of a precipice.... A plaintive tone, sounding at no great distance, at length reached his hearing: he bent his course joyfully towards it.... A thick and pestilential fog clouded the height of the vaulted dungeon. As Lorenzo advanced, he felt a piercing chillness spread itself through his veins.... A creature stretched upon a bed of straw, so wretched, so emaciated, so pale, that he doubted to think her woman (Lewis 354-55).

After being treated to Catherine's high expectations of an abbey which will be like those of the Gothic romances, the reader's imagination and expectation is further tantalized by Tilney. Like Tilney, the reader is aware of Catherine's foolish imaginative bent, but, like Catherine, the reader is in the state of wanting to believe the impossible. Reading fiction, after all, implies that the reader willingly suspend his disbelief. Thus, like Catherine, the reader listens to Tilney's description of the abbey; and both reader and Catherine oscillate between laughing at Tilney's absurdities and hoping that his description, which sounds a lot like *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, is at least partially true.

> You must be aware that when a young lady is (by whatever means) introduced into a dwelling of this kind, she is always lodged apart from the rest of the family. While they snugly repair to their own end of the house, she is formally conducted by Dorothy the ancient housekeeper up a different staircase, and along many gloomy passages.... you [will] find yourself in this gloomy chamber - too lofty and extensive for you....its walls hung with tapestry exhibiting figures as large as life.... Will not your heart sink within you? (Austen 158).

With poor Catherine anxious to have her heart "sink within" her, Austen suddenly deprives her heroine of that pleasurable fear which Radcliffe's Emily had on first seeing the Castle of Udolpho:

> Emily gazed with melancholy awe upon the castle, which she understood to be Montoni's; for, though it was now lighted up by the setting sun, the gothic greatness of its features, and its mouldering walls of dark grey stone, rendered it a gloomy and sublime object (Radcliffe 226-27).

Catherine's first sight of the abbey is a far cry from this. With her mind still dwelling on Tilney's story, all the while knowing it must be nonsense, Austen's poor heroine is

anxiously looking around for the abbey, but she, nevertheless, fails to recognize it when she sees it:

> her impatience for a sight of the abbey - for some time suspended by [Tilney's] conversation on subjects very different - returned in full force, and every bend in the road was expected with solemn awe to afford a glimpse of massy walls of grey stone, rising amidst a grove of ancient oaks, with the last beams of the sun playing in beautiful splendor on its high Gothic windows. But so low did the building stand, that she found herself passing through the great gates of the lodge into the very grounds of Northanger, without having discerned even an antique chimney (Austen 161).

The typical Gothic setting is further subverted when Catherine is taken to her room. Unlike Tilney's frightful warnings, "It was by no means unreasonably large, and contained neither tapestry nor velvet" (Austen 163). Through the use of the negative in describing the room, Austen simultaneously describes the stereotypical room in a Gothic romance. The room, moreover, like the entire abbey, has been modernized. Catherine will not, unlike Radcliffe's Emily, be forced to stay in a place too desolate and decaying to allow for comfort. There is no doubt of Austen's criticism here: her novels are all set in the traditional English countryside, with recognizable and realistically run and organized homes, not in fictitious, imaginative places which the Gothic authors claim to be real. Even Catherine comes to realize that the descriptions of large castles being kept clean by two or three servants is ridiculous:

> How inexpressibly different in these domestic arrangements from such as she had read about - from abbeys and castles, in which, though certainly larger than Northanger, all the dirty work of the house was to be done by two pair of female hands at the utmost. How they could get through it all, had often amazed Mrs. Allen; and, when Catherine saw what was necessary here, she began to be amazed herself (Austen 184).

Austen's parody of the Gothic setting is unmistakeable. In this, her novels are like those of Cervantes which posit that the setting, characters, and plot must be such that they could occur or exist in an alternative, but possible reality.

Gothic Character Traits in English Society

Austen's concern for verisimilitude, in fact, goes farther than that of Cervantes. While he emphasized the poetic imagination, Austen, like most of her contemporaries, values a realistic fiction above an overtly imaginative one. To this end, Austen's characters are presented in a more "realistic" manner. Unlike Don Quijote whose madness is unexplainable, Austen's characters, for example, act in a more plausible manner. Furthermore, there is in *Northanger Abbey* a much greater concern with character than with the adventure driven plot, which was the case in the *Quijote*. Although Austen does not fail to criticize the absurd plots in the Gothic and sentimental romances, a greater amount of her writing deals with the unambiguous characters inherent, and indeed essential, to the romance fiction.

Just as Austen takes her abbey out of the Gothic romance world and presents it in a realistic manner, so too does she portray her characters as types one would find in the actual world. As Mudrick writes,

> Instead of reproducing the Gothic types of characters and situation, she presents their anti-types in the real world, and organizes these into a domestic narrative that parallels or intersects, and at all points is intended to invalidate, the Gothic narrative to which it diligently corresponds (Mudrick 39).

It is through these anti-types that Austen burlesques the static caricatures of the Gothic which "are basically presented in pairs of opposites" (Dimić 144). Austen's reader is not permitted to see the characters as opposites; and whereas some are obviously immoral, they are not the devil incarnate either, nor are the "moral" characters without flaw.

One of the first changes Austen makes in *Northanger Abbey* with respect to the typical Gothic is to limit the number of characters, through the elimination of the numerous subplots so popular in the Gothic. The result of this limitation of subplots marks a radical departure from Cervantes's parody, which purposely inserted stories to mock the chivalric abuse of unrelated tales. Instead of imitating the episodic romance form, Austen's writing is notably more concise, as if parody is taking a second place to her defining the novel.

Despite limiting the number of characters, Austen still manages to play with all of the main ones, from the protective mother to the villainous father. The parodying of the heroine's mother begins on the first page of the novel, where the reader is happily informed,

> Her mother was a woman of useful plain sense, with a good temper, and, what is more remarkable, with a good constitution. She had three sons before Catherine was born; and instead of dying in bringing the latter into the world, as any body might expect, she still lived on - lived to have six children more - to see them growing up around her, and to enjoy excellent health herself (Austen 14).

So much for a poor orphaned heroine who must rely on the likes of Montoni for protection. Austen's heroine does not get off to a good romance beginning. All that appears to change, though, when she is offered the chance to go to Bath with Mr. and

Mrs. Allen. Catherine's mother, however, does not rise to the occasion and behave like a true heroine's mother, as Austen informs us:

> Cautions against the violence of such noblemen and baronets as delight in forcing young ladies away to some remote farmhouse, must, at such a moment, relieve the fulness of her heart. Who would not think so? But Mrs. Morland knew so little of lords and baronets, that she entertained no notion of their general mischievousness and was wholly unsuspicious of danger to her daughter from their machinations (Austen 18).

Thus, with only a warning to bundle up in the evening so as not to catch a cold, the heroine's mother places her confidently in the care of Mrs. Allen.

Separated from her family in Bath, and under the care of her chaperon Mrs. Allen, Catherine's chances of being abused in true Gothic style are once more suggested. It is in Bath that Catherine is first introduced to the charms of Mrs. Radcliffe's Gothic romances, starting with *The Mysteries of Udolpho*; but Austen quickly dispels any notion that Mrs. Allen may be like Emily's Aunt, Mme. Montoni. In setting up her parody of Mrs. Allen, Austen, first recalls to the reader's memory the character and function of a Gothic chaperon:

> It is now expedient to give some description of Mrs. Allen, that the reader may be able to judge, in what manner her actions will hereafter tend to promote the distress of the work, and how she will, probably, contribute to reduce poor Catherine to all the desperate wretchedness of which a last volume is capable (Austen 19).

After this reminder, Austen then describes Mrs. Allen as she actually is:

> [Mrs. Allen was] one of that numerous class of females, whose society can raise no other emotion than surprise at there being any man in the world who could like them well enough to marry them. She had neither beauty, genius, accomplishment, nor manner. The air of a gentlewoman, a great deal of quiet, inactive good temper, and a trifling

> turn of mind were all that could account for her being the choice of a sensible, intelligent man, like Mr. Allen (Austen 20).

Unlike the Gothic chaperon, Mrs. Allen is a woman of "good temper" who cares for Catherine and encourages her going out and meeting people. Her husband, as well, looks out for her welfare and takes it upon himself to ensure that Catherine's dance partner and hero, Henry Tilney, is of a good family and is a clergyman.

Having dispelled all fears--or hopes--that Mrs. Allen could cause any pain to Catherine, Austen then begins to vary her stance, and Mrs. Allen is seen as a threat, albeit a petty one, after all. When poor Catherine is asked to go to Blaize Castle in a gig with Isabella Thorpe's brother John, she declines, saying she has a previous engagement. Having promised to go walking with the Tilneys if the weather was fair, she continues to hope they will come despite the rain and calls upon Mrs. Allen to tell her friends she cannot go with the Thorpes. Regardless of her role as chaperon for the young girl, Mrs. Allen tells her to do as she pleases. Unable to devise more excuses, the young heroine finds herself obliged to accept the offer. It is not until later, however, that Catherine learns from Mr. Allen that his wife has carelessly betrayed her confidence:

> Young men and women driving about the country in open carriages! Now and then it is very well; but going to inns and public places together! It is not right; and I wonder Mrs. Thorpe should allow it. I am glad you do not think of going; I am sure Mrs. Morland would not be pleased. Mrs. Allen are not you of my way of thinking? Do you not think these kind of projects objectionable? (Austen 104).

Mrs. Allen, though, is a woman incapable of any critical thought, except with regards to fashion. Unaware that she is contradicting herself, she now agrees with all her

husband says: "Open carriages are nasty things. A clean gown is not five minutes wear in them. You are splashed getting in and getting out.... I hate an open carriage myself" (Austen 104). Catherine is naturally upset at Mrs. Allen's change of opinion and declares that she had "always hoped you would tell me, if you thought I was doing wrong" (Austen 104). Thus, in Catherine's world, chaperons can be unworthy of their role, not in the same manner as Mme. Montoni, but because they are self-centred, unthinking women who are only capable of worrying about themselves. By this shifting of her stance with regards to her characters' personalities, Austen thus "alerts the reader to the dangers of generalization" (Wallace 266). A character who initially appears acceptable can turn out to be a villain.

In Austen's fiction, villainy does not have to be as spectacular as it is in the Gothic. It can, moreover, be just as horrific, if not more so, when it occurs within a small English community such as Bath. This is reflected not only in the self-centred Mrs. Allen, but in the villains as well. The first such "villain" Catherine encounters in Bath is John Thorpe, her unwelcome suitor. Just as Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho* has the Count Moreno trying to seduce Radcliffe's beautiful Emily, so Austen's *Northanger Abbey* has the unwelcome John Thorpe, who attempts to seduce the supposedly wealthy Catherine. But, whereas Moreno is a menacing figure who can physically threaten poor Emily, Thorpe is too weak and foolish a character to fulfil this role: he is seen only as a nuisance which Catherine endures for the sake of Isabella and her brother. Once again, however, as soon as the reader has accepted that Thorpe is nothing more than an annoyance, he threatens Catherine's growing

relationship with Tilney and becomes a true villain, thereby allowing Catherine to assert herself as the heroine of the story.

It takes Catherine quite a while to discover her role in the events that are occurring around her. From the beginning, Austen makes it clear that "No one who had ever seen Catherine Morland in her infancy, would have supposed her born to be a heroine" (Austen 14). Certainly Catherine has no idea that she will become one and she definitely is not typical heroine material. One only has to think of the lovely accomplished Emily to realize this:

> [Emily] had discovered in her early years uncommon delicacy of mind, warm affections and ready benevolence; but with these was observable a degree of susceptibility too exquisite to admit lasting peace. As she advanced in youth, this sensibility gave a pensive tone to her spirits, and a softness to her manner, which added grace to beauty, and rendered her a very interesting object to persons of a congenial disposition....[Her father] cultivated her understanding with the most scrupulous care.... She discovered in her early years a taste for works of genius (Radcliffe 5).

Our Catherine, on the other hand, despite her affectionate nature, would not be admitted into this strict catalogue of heroines:

> She had a thin awkward figure, a sallow skin without colour, dark lank hair, and strong features.... She was fond of boys' plays, and greatly preferred cricket not merely to dolls, but to the more heroic enjoyments of infancy, nursing a dormouse ... watering a rose-bush....She never could learn or understand any thing before she was taught; and sometimes not even then, for she was often inattentive, and occasionally stupid (Austen 13-14).

This, then, is the innocent and unpretentious girl who goes to Bath. Instead of realizing that she is the heroine, however, she incorrectly perceives herself as the confidant to that anti-heroine, Isabella Thorpe, much to the reader's amusement.

Having read, or at least having claimed to have read, Gothic romances long before Catherine, Isabella eagerly places herself in the role of heroine; and this becomes much easier once she has a naive girl like Catherine worshipping her. Isabella is beautiful and accomplished, at least in the art of flirting to catch a wealthy husband, so that Catherine is immediately charmed by this woman who shows her so much attention and declares her a bosom friend only moments after meeting her. The reader, however, is not taken in by Isabella's charming condescension and is free to laugh at Catherine's gullible nature. Poor Catherine is so naive, in fact, that she is incapable even of playing the role of confidant correctly, thereby losing Isabella's interest in her:

> "Your brother and I were agreeing this morning that though it is vastly well to be here for a few weeks, we would not live here for millions. We soon found out that our tastes were exactly alike in preferring the country to every other place; really, our opinions were so exactly the same, it was quite ridiculous: There was not a single point in which we differed; I would not have had you by for the world; you are such a sly thing, I am sure you would have made a droll remark or other about it."
>
> "No, indeed I should not."
>
> "Oh, yes you would indeed....You would have told us that we seemed born for each other, or some nonsense of that kind....I would not have had you by for the world."
>
> "Indeed you do me injustice; I would not have made so improper a remark upon any account; and besides, I am sure it would never have entered my head."
>
> Isabella smiled incredulously, and talked the rest of the evening to James (Austen 71).

Catherine is too innocent to have thought of any possible relationship between her new friend and her brother. Indeed, their romance is so obvious that Catherine is the only one who is surprised when they announce their engagement.

Isabella's desire to see herself cast in the role of heroine appears again after announcing her engagement. She proceeds to describe to her adoring confidant Catherine how she fell in love with Morland; emphasizing, like a true literary heroine, the colour of her gown and how she styled her hair: "I remember I wore my yellow gown, with my hair done up in braids; and when I came into the drawing-room, and John introduced him, I thought I never saw anybody so handsome before" (Austen 118). Isabella's exaggerated description of her sleepless nights and loss of weight because of her insecurity about Morland's love for her, further encourages the gullible Catherine to believe that Isabella is indeed the true heroine of the story. Nevertheless, "it is *Catherine*, not Isabella, who is the real heroine of Jane Austen's novel" (Gooneratne 50).

Yes, unpretentious, unsuspecting Catherine who first makes her appearance as a burlesque of Gothic heroines is really the heroine of *Northanger Abbey*. Indeed, the reader is given some hint of this at the beginning of the story when he is told,

> from fifteen to seventeen she was in training for a heroine; she read all such works as heroines must read to supply their memories with those quotations which are so serviceable and so soothing in the vicissitudes of their eventful lives (Austen 15).

Every time that the reader attempts to see Catherine as this type of heroine, however, the result is laughable.

Catherine does not know how to respond or act in an appropriate heroic manner. When she sees Tilney with an attractive young woman, for example, she does not assume that he might love her, as Isabella fears Morland may fall in love with another woman. Rather, upon seeing the "fashionable and pleasing-looking

woman, who leant on his arm ... Catherine immediately guessed [her] to be his sister" (Austen 53). Thus, although Catherine shares an uncontrollable imagination with her Gothic sisters, "son jugement n'est pas perverti" (Stéphane 20). Her clear judgement, so different from that of her sisters, positively reveals her as the "anti-heroine" as she would appear in the actual world. This heroine will not faint from the possibilities created by her poor judgement.

Despite the burlesquing of heroism in her creation of a newer and more realistic genre, Austen does not do away with heroic characters. Rather she transforms them and, therefore, "what we observe in *Northanger Abbey* is not the rejection of heroism but its translation into another language" (Levine 347). Catherine's honest acknowledgement of her feelings exemplifies this new heroism. This is seen when, after being tricked into going for a ride with Thorpe instead of waiting for the Tilneys, Catherine worries that the Tilneys will hold this against her. When she tries to visit Eleanor Tilney, she is turned away, and upon seeing Tilney at the play house that night, she fears he is cold towards her because he has misjudged her and is, therefore, angry. Once again, Catherine fails to respond to this in an heroic manner. Unlike Valancourt, whose pride keeps him from confessing the exact nature of his sins to Emily for a hundred pages, Catherine is ruled by

> feelings rather natural than heroic ... instead of considering her own dignity injured by this ready condemnation - instead of proudly resolving, in conscious innocence, to shew her resentment towards him who could harbour a doubt of it .... took to herself all the shame of misconduct, or at least of its appearance, and was only eager for an opportunity of explaining its cause (Austen 93).

Austen does not mock Catherine for being governed by these "feelings rather natural than heroic;" instead it is this honesty and instinctive sense of knowing and doing that which is right that makes her heroic.

Nevertheless, such an unambiguous reading of Catherine as a new type of heroine is quickly cut short by Austen. Thus when the possibility of going out with the Tilneys conflicts with the Thorpes' and her brother's designs a second time, Catherine is finally allowed to be a Gothic heroine, with all the typical sentimental and emotional clichés. When Isabella accuses her of not changing her mind solely out of selfish reasons, "Catherine's heart swelled" (Austen 100). Her status as heroine increases when she discovers that Thorpe talked to Eleanor Tilney, without her knowledge. Refusing to accept this, Catherine claims she will run after the Tilneys and put things right:

> "This will not do," said Catherine; "I cannot submit to this. I must run after Miss Tilney directly and set her right."
> Isabella, however, caught hold of one hand; Thorpe of the other; and remonstrances poured in from all three. Even James was quite angry (Austen 100).

Thus, young Catherine becomes a Gothic heroine: "Catherine is restrained physically - the entrapped heroine after all" (Levine 347).

Austen, however, refuses to let the reader see Catherine in this new role for long, and immediately turns this emotional scene into a comedy. Catherine is allowed to escape from the Thorpes' grasp and runs after Eleanor, charging into the Tilneys' drawing room before the servant. Breathless, she explains why she has come and is then further mocked by Austen. General Tilney, when he realizes the speed with

which this young lady came after them, compliments her on the "elasticity of her walk." Thus, Austen takes Catherine from the heights of heroism to the depths of ridicule: "Catherine ... proceeded gaily ..., walking, as she concluded, with great elasticity, though she had never thought of it before" (Austen 103). This continual playing with the reader's expectations thus forces him to question not only his interpretation of *Northanger Abbey*, but to be conscious of the analytical nature of reading in general.

Catherine as Romance Reader

Catherine's role as romance reader is first mentioned in chapter one, where the reader is told that "she read all such works as heroines must read" (Austen 15). For the most part, Austen defines the romantic heroine through describing what her heroine is not. At times, she does this through a general parody of the stereotypes in the sentimental and Gothic genres, but at other times, her irony is directed towards specific themes in novels or quotations. After Catherine meets Henry Tilney, for example, Austen distances herself from the narrative and playfully refuses to tell the reader if Catherine dreamt of Tilney, based on a letter by Samuel Richardson in the *Rambler* (No 97, vol. ii.), declaring that, in true sentimental fashion, a lady cannot fall in love before the man is in love with her. If this absurd piece of advice is true, it must follow, according to Austen,

> that no young lady can be justified in falling in love before the gentleman's love is declared, it must be very improper that a young lady should dream of a gentleman before the gentleman is known to have dreamt of her (Austen 30).

Austen's parody of the sentimental novels is restrained to a gentle mockery, but with the Gothic her parody, which begins mildly becomes more ironic. The Gothic is first mentioned after Catherine meets Isabella Thorpe in chapter six. The parody of the Gothic initially appears only to be part of her ironic comments about the nature of the new friends' relationship. Under Isabella's guidance, Catherine begins to read *The Mysteries of Udolpho*. Her enjoyment of the novel and her eagerness to read more Gothic novels is expressed in her question, "but are they all horrid, are you sure they are all horrid?" (Austen 40) From this point onwards, Catherine's obsession with the melodramatic novels grows. One of the first questions she asks her new acquaintances is if they have read *Udolpho*. When she goes for a walk with the Tilneys her conversation constantly veers towards the novel and she declares to a startled Miss Tilney that "something very shocking indeed, will soon come out in London" (Austen 87). Relishing in the thought of a new "shocking" novel, it does not occur to Catherine that her words could have any other possible connotations. Aware of her obsession with the novels and her willingness to accept everything she is told, Tilney is left laughing at Catherine's naivité and his sister's fear of political problems in London.

It is in Austen's portrayal of Henry Tilney that the reader's interpretations are the most completely challenged. Whereas Catherine's naive Quixotic behaviour allows for a parallel with Cervantes's mad knight, Tilney's varying behaviour allows the reader to see similarities with the Canon of Toledo and with Sancho Panza. Tilney shares a similar role to that of the canon in relation to the author in that he, at times,

is Austen's mouthpiece, particularly when satirizing the assembly at Bath or when critiquing literature. At other times, however, Tilney's wit and humour associate him with Sancho; both are used to mock the absurdities of romance in a gentle, teasing manner at the expense of the Quixotic characters, who do not catch the thread of the joke. This combining of two opposing views of romance literature in Tilney, allies him closer to the author's opinion than it was the case for any of the characters in the *Quijote*. It allows Austen to create for her reader the mind-set of a reader while reading. Catherine's admiration of Tilney and her growing belief in everything he says allow the reader to watch how she *reads* everything that Tilney, an authority for her, says. In this way, Austen can take the act of reading a step farther than Cervantes could. In the *Quijote*, the story begins after Don Quijote has read too many romances, and we only see how he acts as a result. By contrast, in *Northanger Abbey*, Catherine is introduced to romance only after she goes to Bath. The reader sees her initial reactions to it and later can discover exactly what her reading process--and that of a passive reader--is by watching her reactions to Tilney.

Tilney is first introduced as Catherine's hero after he "saves" her by asking her to dance. Despite this act, however, Tilney is not presented as a Gothic hero, such as Radcliffe's Valancourt:

> [St. Aubert] saw [in Valancourt] a frank and generous nature, full of ardour, highly susceptible of whatever is grand and beautiful, but impetuous, wild, and somewhat romantic....His perceptions were clear, and his feelings just; his indignation of an unworthy, or his admiration of a generous action, were expressed in terms of equal vehemence (Radcliffe 41).

Such is the noble character of a Gothic hero, but not of Austen's hero. Where Valancourt is frank, Tilney is witty; where Valancourt is generous, Tilney is critical; where Valancourt sees with the eyes of a romantic, Tilney sees with the eyes of a cynic.

Moreover, while Emily can be instantly charmed by Valancourt and find that they agree in everything, Catherine is so bewildered by Tilney that she does not know whether to laugh at him or to take him seriously. The reader, as well, is left confused on how to read him. At times, Austen presents him as Catherine's teacher, for instant, when he pedantically corrects her use of the word "nice," but in other and more crucial moments, he deserts Catherine and tells her to figure things out for herself. More than this, he will purposely mislead her on certain occasions, as, for example when Catherine is worried about the attention Tilney's elder brother, Captain Tilney, is paying to her own brother's fiancée, Isabella. Unable to accept that her friend could be flirting, Tilney refuses to explain the situation to Catherine and, moreover, disallows its potential seriousness, aware that she will believe what he tells her:

> You have no doubt of the mutual attachment of your brother and your friend; depend upon it therefore, that real jealousy never can exist between them; depend upon it that no disagreement between them can be of any duration (Austen 152).

Aware that Catherine's perception is incorrect and that she cannot possibly know the strength of their "mutual attachment," Tilney knows, therefore, that his advice is misleading and potentially harmful.

Tilney's casual treatment of Catherine is again seen when he teases her about finding Northanger a Gothic abbey. Cognizant, moreover, of her simplistic belief in the books she reads, and in him, he describes her adventures at Northanger while parodying *The Mysteries of Udolpho*. In Catherine's first days at Northanger, she in fact enacts everything Tilney described to her. When caught by him, however, his reply is condescending: "Dearest Miss Morland, what ideas have you been admitting?" (Austen 198) But, he is the one who gave her those ideas, and as if aware of this, there is a marked change in his treatment of her after this time, reflected in that "he paid her rather more attention than usual. Catherine had never wanted comfort more, and he looked as if he were aware of it" (Austen 199).

Catherine's hero, then, is an "anti-hero," more realistic than romantic, more fallible than perfect, but also more lively. Of greater importance, Tilney's treatment of Catherine signifies a break with the stereotypical relationship between sentimental or Gothic heroes and heroines. Unlike Pamela or Emily, whose salvation is dependent upon their heroes, Catherine must learn to rely upon herself. Tilney will not be her saviour. Instead, he teaches her, through his teasing, ambivalent attitude to learn to think for herself.

One of the most honest comments Catherine makes about herself is when she tells Thorpe, "As to *most matters*, to say the truth, there are not many things I know my own mind about" (Austen, 124). That Catherine is rather silly and even stupid at times Austen makes clear from the beginning, but she also, more importantly emphasizes that Catherine will not be ready for marriage until she learns to think

independently. Catherine's inability to think for herself and to know her own mind is not unique to herself. In fact, most of the women in the text, besides Elenor Tilney, are portrayed as just as silly: the problem is common to women because of a lack of a proper education. Catherine's mother, the reader is told, is too busy raising the younger children to worry about her older daughters' education. This lack of education, however, has left Catherine vulnerable to others' interpretation of the world, however faulty it may be. This dependence on others is part of the reason Catherine prefers Gothic romances to other forms of fictions: the all-controlling author tells the readers exactly how to interpret each episode. When Catherine tries to rely on people for interpreting "real" life, however, she is forced to learn that their analyses are biased and not always correct. It is only after discovering this that Catherine learns to think for herself and wins Henry Tilney. Marriage in Jane Austen's world is based upon a relationship of understanding and sharing, rather than upon mutual idolization and female dependence.

Gothic Romance Translated into Realism?

Austen's parody of the Gothic, nevertheless, does not mean that she completely does away with it. This is seen in her presentation of the Tilney's. Thus, after preparing the reader for the "anti-hero," who serves as Catherine's teacher, rather than her saviour, Austen once again shifts her focus, and turns Henry and Eleanor Tilney into Gothic heroic characters who must endure a tyrannical father. Although the reader continues to be unaware of General Tilney's role, there are vague

hints concerning his character before Catherine goes to the abbey. After being invited to the Tilneys in Bath, Catherine is disappointed by the visit. Neither Tilney nor Eleanor said much, and only the General was pleasant, leaving Catherine unable to discover why: "It puzzled her to account for all this. It could not be General Tilney's fault. That he was perfectly agreeable and good-natured, and all together a very charming man, did not admit of a doubt" (Austen 129). If, however, the reader is paying close attention to this description of him and to what follows, he will remember a similar description of a Gothic villain that Catherine has read about:

> Among the visitors ... were two Italian gentlemen, of whom one was named Montoni, ... a man about forty, of an uncommonly handsome person, with features manly and expressive, but whose countenance exhibited, upon the whole, more of the haughtiness of command (Radcliffe 41).

The General, as well, is described as "tall and handsome" (Austen 129). And, when Catherine explains the visit to Isabella, Isabella correctly claims it was "pride", but incorrectly assumes it was on the part of the children, not the father. It is the father, however, who is the proud man. Instead of having "the haughtiness of command", the General is condescending--hardly a great difference--and even Catherine picks up on this when she thinks he has the face of a Montoni.

According to Stéphane, "Le thème gothique se précise avec l'invitation à Northanger Abbey formulée par le général Tilney" (Stéphane 21). It is at the abbey that Catherine becomes a Quixotic heroine, and Austen sets up her parody of the Gothic heroine's adventures while in a medieval setting. The parody is especially effective because Austen has picked up the key aspect of the emotional upheaval of an

overimaginative heroine. And, while Austen mocks the Gothic machinery, she does not burlesque her heroine's emotions; rather she acknowledges "common" anxieties to the extent that "the anxieties of common life began soon to succeed to the alarms of romance" (Austen 201). With *The Mysteries of Udolpho* as her model, Austen "interposited" the Gothic machinery "into the given machine of *Northanger Abbey's* common life, not to be mocked but to raise that machine to its real importance" (Wilt 126). Thus, although parodying the Gothic romance, Austen is also transforming it into a new, more realistic form which favours real anxieties over imaginative ones.

This succession of real anxieties over imaginative ones is seen in Catherine's Gothic "adventures" while at Northanger. Before arriving at Northanger, however, Tilney already sets the mood by parodying Gothic conventions. This parody has two critical functions: the first is sheer comedy, through a mocking of clichéd emotional responses; and the second function is a foreshadowing of Austen's intentions for Catherine at the abbey. Tilney's parody of the Gothic is an obvious debunking of *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, a book he and Catherine have talked about in the past. At that time, Catherine's ignorance of the liberty Radcliffe took in describing her picturesque setting informed Tilney that Catherine is far from a careful reader. He can thus, with relative ease, string together a few of the worst clichés of the romances to hook Catherine and, at the same time, amuse himself and the reader.

Tilney's choice of clichés are interesting in that he manages to choose the ones which are most likely to produce an emotional response in a reader. He asks the enthraled Catherine, "Will not your mind misgive you?" (Austen 159). How often did

Radcliffe's Emily faint from horror, or temporarily lose her sanity? But it is the reader's response that Austen is actually mocking. Catherine responds in a manner of the average Gothic reader, which is a blend of belief mixed with disbelief: "Oh! Mr Tilney, how frightful! - This is just like a book! - But it cannot really happen to me. I am sure your housekeeper is not really Dorothy. - Well, what then?" (Austen 159). In this passage, Austen's complex analysis of the reading process forces the reader himself to acknowledge how he reads. As Fergus notes,

> She is calling attention to the comic incongruity between the average reader's immediate involvement with the plot, his eagerness for what will happen next, and his distance from it, his enjoyment of what the narrator calls "the luxury of a raised, restless, and frightened imagination" (Fergus 28).

While parodying the reading practice of distance and involvement, Austen will then demand the same from her reader when Catherine enters her "Gothic" abbey.

Catherine's adventures in the abbey are foreshadowed by Tilney's parody of the Gothic and there are obvious parallels between the two, reflecting the value, especially unconsciously which Catherine places on Tilney's words. He is always in her mind when she partakes in her adventures, and after the second one she thinks, "Heaven forbid that Henry Tilney should even know her folly! And it was a great measure in his own doing, for had not the cabinet appeared so exactly to agree with his description of her adventures she should never have felt the smallest curiosity about it" (Austen 173). But why would she have thought this, unless she did actually believe him, despite saying "Miss Tilney ... would never put her into such a chamber as he had described! - She was not afraid" (Austen 160)? If Catherine did not believe

Tilney, she would not imagine herself in such a chamber just because the chest was there. Catherine's involvement in the story, despite her denial, reflects the reader, who, "taught by Henry to expect only deflation for the Gothic, finds himself caught up in it despite all the mockery he has encountered and enjoyed" (Fergus 29).

Austen's description of Catherine's emotional procession during her three "Gothic" adventures force the reader continually to be drawn into the story only to find the mockery return. This is accomplished through a three-fold pattern which begins with a strong comic tone; then, Austen introduces a more serious process in which the Gothic devices are imitated in what appears to be a sincere manner; and, finally, the comic element returns. When Catherine first sees the chest, for instance, her response is purely comic: "This is strange indeed! I did not expect such a sight as this! - an immense heavy chest! - What can it hold? ...I will look into it - cost me what it may" (Austen 163). After this, the passage reflects a more Radcliffean description, with slight ironic touches, in which the chest and Catherine's thoughts about it are expressed in detail:

> Catherine bent over it intently, but without being able to distinguish any thing with certainty. She could not, in whatever direction she took it, believe the last letter to be a T; and yet that it should be any thing else in that house was a circumstance to raise no common degree of astonishment. If not originally their's, by what strange events could it have fallen into the Tilney family? (Austen 164).

Just as the reader is being drawn into this question, despite the ironic distance, Austen returns to comedy. Catherine's "fearful curiosity" is replaced by a common-place fear of being late for dinner, a discovery that the chest holds nothing more than cotton

counterpane, and embarrassment over having wasted her time in this manner when asked to hurry.

The second adventure follows the same three-fold formula as the first, but this time there is a closer imitation of the Gothic elements and more sustained effort of distancing the reader. This is seen in Austen's description of Catherine discovering the manuscript:

> Her heart fluttered, her knees trembled, and her cheeks grew pale. She seized, with an unsteady hand, the precious manuscript, for half a glance sufficed to ascertain written characters; and while she acknowledged with awful sensations this striking exemplification of what Henry had foretold, resolved instantly to peruse every line before she attempted to rest.
>
> The dimness of the light her candle emitted made her turn to it with alarm; ... she hastily snuffed it. Alas! it was snuffed and extinguished in one. A lamp could not have expired with more awful effect (Austen 169-170).

This frightful discovery of a manuscript and the sudden loss of the candle light are common motifs in the Gothic. In fact, twenty years after Austen wrote her parody, Maturin creates a very similar scene:

> [John] resolutely entered the closet, shut the door, and proceeded to search for the manuscript. It was soon found, for the directions of old Melmoth were forcibly written and strongly remembered. The manuscript, old, tattered, and discoloured, was taken from the very drawer in which it was mentioned in the will. Melmoth's hands felt as cold as those of his dead uncle, ... there was a dead silence through the house. Melmoth looked wistfully at the candles, snuffed them, and still thought they looked dim (Maturin 20-21).

Interestingly enough, despite the references to the cold and to death in Maturin, Austen's description demands more of an emotional response from her reader, even

though the intensity of her language is meant to parody the Gothic heroine and distance the reader at the same time.

The intensity of emotion in the second adventure is further increased because it is carried into a following chapter before it finally resolves in comedy. Only then does Catherine discover that her precious manuscript is nothing more than a laundry bill. With this bill, Austen once again parodies Radcliffe's style: this time her trademark of offering a rational explanation of all mysteries. This laundry bill is drawn into the story through its unseen creator, who turns out to be Eleanor's suitor. This suitor used to be a commoner, but by some stroke of fortune (that is, authorial manipulation) he gains a title and a rank. Here, in Eleanor at long last, we are presented with the traditional Gothic heroine, but in Austen, she is given only a few lines, whereas her new heroine, Catherine, receives a whole book:

> The marriage of Eleanor Tilney, her removal from all the evils of such a home as Northanger ... to a home of her choice and the man of her choice, is an event to give general satisfaction ... I know no one more entitled, by unpretending merit, or better prepared by habitual suffering, to receive and enjoy felicity (Austen 250-251).

When the reader is finally introduced to the Gothic, suffering heroine, he is already too involved with Catherine's story to see her as anything more than a convenient friend for Catherine, permitting her to spend more time with Tilney.

The traditional Gothic heroine is pushed to the side to allow for an "anti-type" heroine. This "anti-heroine" shares with the typical Gothic heroine an over-active imagination, which comes into play especially during Catherine's final adventure. This adventure is the most developed one and concerns her reading General Tilney as

Radcliffe's Montoni. The same three-fold pattern is used, only this time it is drawn out into successive climaxes as Catherine attempts to see Mrs. Tilney's room. Twice, leanor tries to take her there, and twice General Tilney calls them away, in a voice which "resounded through the building, giving to his daughter the first intimation of his presence, and to Catherine terror upon terror" (Austen 192). From these delays and from the General's stern demeanour, Catherine draws the conclusion that Mrs. Tilney is not dead and that the General has imprisoned her:

> the probability that Mrs. Tilney yet lived, shut up for causes unknown, and receiving from the pitiless hands of her husband a nightly supply of coarse food, was the conclusion which necessarily followed. Shocking as was the idea, it was at least better than a death unfairly hastened, as in the natural course of things, she must ere long be released. The suddenness of her reputed illness; the absence of her daughter, and probably of her other children, ... all favoured the supposition of her imprisonment. - Its origin - jealousy perhaps, or wanton cruelty - was yet to be unravelled (Austen 188).

The liveliness of Catherine's imagination from the little information she is given reflects her avid reading of Gothics, as the phrase "natural course of things" reflects. In romance, the heroes and heroines must escape after imprisonment and tell their story, so that the mystery and motives can be "unravelled."

The reader is at this point encouraged to laugh with Austen at the foolishness of Catherine's fancy; nevertheless, he is continually drawn into the adventure through Austen's repeated interruptions as the girls try to enter the room. Once the reader is prepared for something of interest to be in the room, Austen shifts again, and the room, which held so much promise, is a disappointment, not only for Catherine, but for the reader as well:

> The lock yielded to her hand, and luckily, with no sullen sound that could alarm a human being.... She beheld what fixed her to the spot and agitated every features. - She saw a large, well-proportioned apartment, an handsome dimity bed, arranged as unoccupied with a housemaid's care.... Catherine had expected to have her feelings worked, and worked they were. Astonishment and doubt first seized them; and a shortly succeeding ray of common sense added some bitter emotion of shame (Austen 193).

As in Catherine's two previous adventures, this one appears to end with Catherine feeling ashamed for her foolish imaginings. Just as the reader is prepared to laugh at this third misadventure, however, Austen turns this one into a truly distressing experience for the young heroine. Leaving the room, Catherine hears footsteps and hurries out the back way to discover the last person she wants to see in her moment of shame: Henry Tilney. Whereas a Gothic heroine bursts into tears at the slightest distress, Austen's heroine at this moment raises "common" anxieties above fictional ones. Her heroine is forced to endure the humiliation of having her imaginative ideas regarding Tilney's father open to the condemnation of her would-be lover.

Like a true hero, Tilney allows the incident to pass, but once again, he refuses to comment upon a member of his family. Just as he was not honest with Catherine about the relationship between his brother and Isabella, so now he does not discuss his father's true character with her. Tilney's lie is intensified by the fact that, immediately following this incident Catherine receives a letter from her brother, stating that Isabella has in fact left him for Captain Tilney. Whereas Tilney's first silence only indirectly hurts Catherine, his second silence regarding his father's character will hurt both of them.

The enigma of General Tilney is a major factor in all of Catherine's imaginings. Although the reader is content to laugh at her ideas regarding the General, Austen again allows her heroine to be right, thereby denying the reader any predictable patterns on which to rely. After the third adventure, Catherine retracts all her Gothic imaginings and begins to view the romances critically:

> Charming as were all Mrs. Radcliffe's works, and charming even as were the works of all her imitators, it was not perhaps that human nature, at least in the midland counties of England, was to be looked for. Of the Alps and Pyrenees, with their pine forests and their vices, they might give a faithful delineation; ... In the central part of England there was surely some security for the existence of even a wife not beloved, in the laws of the land, and the manners of the age. Murder was not tolerated, servants were not slaves, and neither poison nor sleeping potions to be procured, like rhubarb, from every druggist (Austen 200).

The reader willingly agrees with these words, which, although Catherine's thoughts, are pronounced in the voice of the author. Radcliffe's romances and Catherine's fancies are given a final pat on the head, pronounced charming and then dismissed as impossibilities in a civilized country like England. Through this process, the reader is confident that this is truly Austen's opinion because, after all, this is a parody of the Gothic.

Austen, however, refuses to let the reader stay in this comfortable position. Soon after the rejection of Gothic romances, Catherine becomes a "Gothic" heroine after all when, for no apparent reason, General Tilney has her sent from his home without escort or money. While her arrival at Northanger consisted of listening to Henry's parody of Gothic conventions, her departure becomes a Gothic motif. Like a true heroine, Catherine accepts this decree, given by a hurt Eleanor:

> It was with pain that Catherine could speak at all; and it was only for Eleanor's sake that she attempted it. "I am sure," she said, "I am very sorry if I have offended him. It was the last thing I would willingly do. But do not be unhappy, Eleanor. An engagement you know must be kept (Austen 225).

Catherine's self-control and dignity in the scene reflect her passage into adulthood. She does not question or complain, but leaves with more politeness than the General is capable of. When Tilney follows to claim her as his wife, the reader can agree that she is now ready to accept him.

Only at this point does Tilney finally explain his father's character to Catherine and the confused reader. She learns that his treatment of her was based upon the erroneous assumption, which he acquired from John Thorpe, that she was wealthy. At a later meeting with Thorpe, however, Thorpe, upset at the break between the two families, tells the General that the Morland family is actually very poor. Upon hearing this, the General does not bother to ascertain if it is the truth. Instead, he evicts Catherine in a petty rage. This act allows Tilney to become a Gothic hero, one who in keeping his obligation to his lady, must overcome his villainous and tyrannical father. The act, moreover, allows Catherine to acknowledge "that in suspecting General Tilney of either murdering or shutting up his wife, she had scarcely sinned against his character, magnified his cruelty" (Austen 247). As Catherine learns that people are more complex and "real life situations more difficult to cope with, than those found in fiction" (Gooneratne 55), Austen gives her two final messages to the reader, the first being that the Gothic machinery, conventions, and

motifs become much more effective when used in dealing with the anxieties of everyday life.

Austen's parody of the Gothic, then, does more than criticize the genre. Although she does mock the use of the medieval settings and trappings, including ruined castles and abbeys, wandering around in the dark, and the famous thunder storms, she is not so quick to condemn completely the other aspects of the Gothic, such as characterization and plot. Instead, by re-examining the characters, she gives them more depth and potential. Her heroine will not be looking for ghosts and supernatural villains behind every tapestry, but she is now capable of recognizing a mercenary villain. Moreover, Catherine is allowed to experience the agonies of everyday life, not just those dreamed of in romances. Austen has proven that the common anxieties of life are worth writing about and do make for interesting plots. In fact, for Austen, they are more appealing: it is more frightening to encounter a Montoni in a civilized resort like Bath than in a make-belief setting. Thus, Austen's complex parody condemns and modifies at the same time: she thereby provides the example of what a novel should be, by taking the machinations of the Gothic and bringing them back out of their old English or foreign Catholic settings into contemporary England.

Austen's last message to the reader is that a final interpretation of the text is not handed down by an all-knowing author, but decided by the critical and astute reader: "I leave it to be settled by whomsoever it may concern, whether the tendency of this work be altogether to recommend parental tyranny, or reward filial

disobedience" (Austen 252). With such a claim, Austen withdraws from offering a moral to her story, thereby emphasizing the role of the reader in gaining his own understanding. Like her heroine, Catherine, each reader must learn to read the texts before them, whether people or books, for themselves, with only a guiding hand from an authority.

Conclusion

The portrayal of a mimetic fiction for Cervantes and Austen demands going beyond the confines of the romance genre, which is restricted due to its persistence in presenting characters as types and limiting the function of plot to a series of meaningless adventures. Both authors insist on a literary form in which the reader participates in the interpretation, if not the creation, of the text. For Cervantes, this text follows closely the loose, episodic structure of the chivalric romance in which his characters roam, free from the author. Thus, the reader is forced to interpret the situation for himself, guided by the various perspectives drawn by the characters and the narrator. Interpretation thus becomes an integral part of reading. Austen, as well, plays with the reader, refusing to give him only one view point on the narrative. She takes this process one step further, however, by creating in Catherine and Tilney the roles of reader and writer, respectively. Not only does the reader experience the reading process, as in the *Quijote*, but he can also watch it being enacted in Catherine's actions. For this reason, Austen limits the focus of the text to Catherine's perspectives, or to those that she directly receives from others.

Catherine becomes a guide for Austen's readers. She provides the example of how not to read, and later, of how to read correctly and interpret a text. In this, she surpasses Don Quijote, who is confined to being a negative role model for the readers. Such a boundary is imposed because of his insanity with regards to reading romances. Catherine, in contrast, is impaired only by innocence, inexperience, and

naiveté, and is, therefore, capable of overcoming her deficiciencies with regards to reading and interpretation.

By allowing her heroine to overcome her folly, Austen's text departs more from parody than Cervantes's, and, as a result, comes closer to defining what a novel is, rather than what it is not. Through retaining the romance's length, and its loose and somewhat meaningless narrative structure, Cervantes can display exactly which aspects of the romance he is parodying. Moreover, because his scope is broader, combining the chivalric, pastoral, and the picaresque, he must allow for sufficient space and characters to burlesque all these genres. Austen, in contrast, has limited herself to two romance genres which have a closer link, in that the Gothic borrows much from the sentimental in terms of characterization and plot. As well, whereas Cervantes will parody entire adventures in one scene, Austen contents herself with a brief passage reminding the reader of how a Gothic character will deal with a situation, and then describe how her character acts.

There are, thus, obvious differences in the use of parody and realism in the two novels. This does not mean, however, that they do not warrant a comparison. Parody of romance for both writers is a means of burlesquing poor writing styles and of portraying a better literary form through a blend of criticism and praise of romance. Through parody, moreover the writers writers confront the issue of reality and fantasy.

Perhaps the one major trait the authors offer the modern novel can be seen when they confront the paradox of reality and fiction. Despite the continued quest for

a more realistic genre, both authors force their readers to acknowledge that what they are reading is a fiction. When it comes to judging romance fiction, the judgement that it is sheer fantasy is not difficult to make, but since they are distinguishing their texts with the claim that they are more realistic, the problem of defining reality becomes more confusing. The reader is encouraged to see Don Quijote and Catherine as real characters and fictional ones at the same time. Don Quijote in Part II, the reader is told, is fictionalized by Cide Hamete and he, along with Sancho, have difficulty distinguishing between their "real" selves and their "fictional" selves. Catherine, as well, sees herself as a fictional heroine at times, and the author clearly relegates her to that role whenever she threatens to "live" beyond the confines of the text. The reader, thus, is left to judge between reality and fantasy. Clearly, these novels are more realistic than the romance, but what is "reality" in literature? Why, moreover, are the authors forcing the reader to see their protagonists as fictional when they are arguing for a more realistic genre?

This apparent paradox in Cervantes's and Austen's works is related to their definition of realism in literature. They are not claiming to be historians, hence realism will not take the form of historical truth. Instead, the authors advocate a convention of realistic fiction, a genre in which the world view and universal laws are consistent with those of the known world. Thus, while the characters remain fictitious, their actions are consistent with those of the society and time they represent. Freed from the constraints of historical fact and fantastic absurdities,

moreover, literature is capable of fulfilling its function to instruct through immersing the reader in a story he is capable of accepting as plausible.

Such a definition of realist fiction opens multiple directions for the modern novel, from comic to serious, as the diverse examples of Cervantes and Austen show. Cervantes, perhaps because of a greater desire and the necessity to separate himself from histories, uses a mad hero, thereby freeing the poetic imagination to create surprising and unique situations, which achieves a feeling of *admiratio* in the reader without the crutch of the supernatural. Such a choice opens his novel more to comedy than tragedy.

Although Austen's novel is not lacking in comic function, the moral development and education of the heroine--something Cervantes's hero does not undergo--gives the novel, overall, a more pragmatic tone. Thus, while *Don Quijote* deals with more existential and philosophical considerations, *Northanger Abbey* is more concerned with social considerations. As well, Austen's parody of romance is not as dramatic. The mood of *Northanger Abbey* is more subdued than that of the *Quijote*, as it portrays the "everyday" life of a middle-class heroine. The effect of this is to further distance the novel from the over-dramaticized Gothic romances. Thus, whereas Don Quijote goes charging across the country-side, attacking windmills or herds of sheep and guarded inns or "castles," Catherine's adventures are confined to the pump-rooms in Bath and sunlit bedrooms at the Abbey. Such a distinction between the dramatic and the mundane is evident in the characterization of both novels as well. Most of the characters Don Quijote encounters, which are not romance types,

are, nevertheless, caricatures. Although they laugh at Don Quijote, many of them are also romantic idealists, attempting to live as pastoral heroes, or they are characters, who bored with everyday life, hope to gain some amusement from teasing the mad knight. In *Northanger Abbey*, however, there is a greater attempt to present characters in a realistic manner. Parody is thus used in a more controlled manner in Austen's writing, and as a result, she overcomes the limitations imposed by parodic discourse.

By centralizing the question of reality in fiction, Cervantes and Austen gave the modern novel the essential ingredient of a critically active reader. The romance genre requires no such reader and, in fact, loses its appeal once it is read in an over-critical manner. Realistic fiction, of the type of the *Quijote* and *Northanger Abbey*, however, could only be developed once a means of writing and production were available. The constant playing with the meaning of the term "realistic" is not possible within an oral literary form. Cervantes and Austen, though, could be sure of an audience well-versed in solitary reading and capable of drawing the connections necessary to understand parody and, moreover, in participating in a slow reading (and re-readings) necessary to enjoy the play of different levels of fiction and reality within the novels.

Through parody of the romance, thus, Cervantes and Austen contribute to the development of the novel as a self-conscious reader-orientated genre, but one which will, as a result, draw the reader more into the text than romance fantasy is capable of doing. By focusing on the reader and playing with the reader, they give the novel a sense of a game, as if literature were an amusement. They help to create a genre

which, through parodying and questioning the romance, becomes a game of illusion and reality.

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